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Buffett-style investing shines

By Ma. Salve Duplito
Inquirer.net

VANDERMER C.T. SAY STARTED IN investing when he was 32 years old. That was 22 years ago. He recalls picking stocks the way he would play darts. Not anymore. For the last decade or so, Vandermer has become a Warren Buffett-follower, investing only in good companies at good prices and buying them for the long haul.

In the last couple of months, amid cascading losses in markets all over the world, Buffett's value investing philosophy has attracted

The fact that Buffett, the world's richest man according to Forbes magazine, has emerged as Wall Street's knight in shining armor after injecting funds into Goldman Sachs and General Electric a week ago has most likely upped the ante significantly on value-style investing.

And if the sale of Buffett's first and only authorized biography "The Snowball: Warren Buffett and The Business Of Life" written by Alice Schroeder (editor of Berkshire Hathaway's layman-friendly annual reports) is any indication, the interest is just heating up. Just days after it hit bookstores in Sept. 29, the book has claimed a top spot on Amazon's best-selling book list.

Say the Chartered Financial Analysts of the Philippines's new president, explains that value-style investing is based on very simple principles. "All we look for are good businesses at good prices," he says.

What makes a good business? One that you're absolutely sure will make good money in the next, say, 20 years and run by highly capable management with high integrity. That means you only invest in businesses you understand—a trademark Warren Buffett philosophy.

In this day and age of extremely volatile markets, the value investor is unfazed because he buys and holds for as long as he needs the investment. He is not concerned about fluctuations. His life is relatively simpler and less harried be-

BUFFETT STYLE B2-4

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Buffett-style investing shines

Pretzel B2-1

cause for fun. Wall Street can seldom in its own toxic securities.

Contrast that with an investor who makes money from trading stocks or bonds and who had to watch his portfolio drop more than 20 percent in the last couple of weeks, editing himself every morning. "Is this even going to end?"

In fact, for you, even value investors for homes who have the extra cash are now stroking up for acquisitions. After all, prices are low and whether to good or bad times, a good business is a good business.

"In general, what is happening is good for us because the crisis is pushing down prices. My job now is to look for good businesses," Soy says.

Whether in stocks and bonds, Soy says good opportunities in the market are starting to emerge. He declines to say what are good buys, but gives tips. Look for businesses that are managed by people with high integrity and find companies that respect the rights of minority shareholders. These two criteria alone will shorten the list of good bargains out there in the market, he says.

"Right now, Buffett can buy almost anything in the market but look at companies that he is buying, Goldman and GE, companies that are being run very well. ... Integrity is important, the goodness of a person is important. What if you meet some guy with no integrity but you can probably make $200 million, you should say no. Why go through all that stress? There are better ways to make money" he adds.

There may sound like dreamy principles in a day and age where overarching is measured by money and returns, but it is also succinctly explains why Wall Street is retching like a drunk on karaoke in court. Greed is the root cause of the subprime mortgage problem. Even more greed by investment bankers and hedge fund managers blew that out of proportion through derivative instruments disclosed in legalese language even less understood.

"Buffett and Charlie Munger (Buffett's business partner) have attended derivatives three or more years ago. Munger said comparing derivatives to a sewer. It is an insult to sewers. How is this crisis, what is the value of his advice? Multibillion dollars because what are the key to the problems now? Derivatives," Soy explains.

That said, Soy doesn't see the popularity of value investing to stay for long. "It is the flavor of the year, but if you are asking if it will generate be much more popular than before, I would guess not. Buffett learned from Benjamin Graham more than 50 years ago. It is not a secret, it has been around for a long time. But it has never been a popular style," he says.

Avoiding annual reports and understanding what makes a business tick takes a lot of patience. It's based on analysis, and not a quick fix to make a quick buck by flipping a stock or bond. Adhering to these principles and being disciplined in the market pays, says Soy, because old habits die hard.

"There are a number of value investors here in the country. They are in the minority, as well as with any other market, even in the US," he says.

And clients make more money than the flippers? Soy knowingly smiles, and says, yes, they are wealthy.

The 32-year-old investor tries to emulate Buffett as just in investing but also in the way he lives. Buffett, the shy billionaire who is also called the Oracle of Omaha, still lives in his house in Nebraska that he built more than 50 years ago, doesn't have a driver, is based loyal, and highly values integrity. Soy sent an old model mobile phone and says his passion is helping people live better lives.

"My clients have been telling me about the book (baseball) when it came out, and they were very excited about it. It's like our Manny Pobiel," he says with disbelief and amusement.

(E-mail the author at light-dreams@gmail.com. For more articles on personal finance, visit MoneyCoach blog at http://blogs.inquirer.net/moneycoach)

Mapping the Future

Pretzel B2-4

be bought on margin—that is to say the buyer paid the broker only a small portion of the cost of the share, the difference being made up with money borrowed by the broker from a bank and loaned to the buyer."

Second, the engine of growth was the culture of getting rich quick.

The book states: "It is an unhappy fact of speculative buying that when prices are doing fast, whether the asset owner in land, or shares, or even tulip bulbs, people cease to look for the reason why they are rising. The instinct to be continually worthwhile for what it costs is that they can be sold at a profit—sometimes a very great profit."

In 1928 and 1929, Americans became dazzled by the real possibility of becoming very rich very quickly."

Third, to the initial exhilaration and divertence that happened before the 1929 Crash, the chairman of the powerful New Orient City Bank, Charles E. Mitchell, offered to lend $20 million "to avoid any danger on rights in the money market."

According to the book, "Mitchell, who was speculating heavily, had strong reasons for raising the loans to continue, and his words rallied the market. Five years later, Mitchell was arrested and tried on charges of tax evasion."

Black Tuesday

Fourth, on Oct. 24th, Black Thursday, as stock prices were falling like lead, the vice president of the stock exchange "walked onto the floor as representative of the banker's pool, and bought heavily in 20 successive stocks."

"Again, the volatile market recovered ... But Tuesday Oct. 29 was the most devastating day in the history of the American Stock Exchange ... Price of 10 Oct. 29, the market were set falling. It reached its lowest level of the year on Nov. 13th."

What happened to the men, Richard Whitney? He was later tried and sentenced for misappropriating stock exchange funds.

1918, when rich and poor people point undivided attitudes, they lowered outsiders.

The book continues: "Men who had called themselves millionaires a week before were now irretrievably ruined. Large fortunes, small savings, all wiped out ... Billions of dollars worth of profit—some real, some paper—had vanished, and the other clerk, the chauffeur, the relative closest, the salesman had lost all their capital."

Sixth, onto the month and days of the crash—Oct. 23 to 29."

Another sign of downturn is the government negotiation of housing about selling of stocks.

Shorting is an investment strategy in a declining market when an investor sells stocks he does not own at a certain price and later buys them in the market when prices, he speculates, will fall lower than his selling price.

The difference in price is his profit. The lower the buying price you can get to be, the greater will his profit be. He sells when the market goes down in a mistaken.

Another decision is the creation of Futures Exchange that promotes selling and buying of contracts for speculative purposes and allowing financial institutions in their conduits to play the game.

For example, a buyer agrees in April 2009 to buy from a seller an oil contract at an agreed price, say $150 per barrel for future delivery in June 2008. Under this arrangement, the buyer and seller of oil may not actually transfer oil barrels, have an activation of investing, delivering or buying actual stocks of oil and have an actual need for oil.

They are in the business of speculating on the selling and buying of paper contracts—derivatives. The prices that are transacted are based on the volume of buys and sells for the paper derivatives, not on the demand and supply of the actual oil commodity by markets.

The same goes for buys and sells of foreign currency futures, interest rate futures, stock index futures and many other speculators of investments.

These derivatives are traded in futures exchanges, the most notable among them are Chicago Mercantile Exchange and New York Mercantile Exchange.

Deviation

The most recent example of derivatives is, of course, the buy and sell of financial papers called collateralized debt obligation (CDO) and collateralized mortgage obligation (CMO) that brought about the subprime crisis in the US property sector and the collapse of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

Media interestingly attributes the cause of the entire present crisis in the economy entirely on the subprime debacle in the property sector.

However, this may not be to and the subprime crisis may just be a come up for a greater flaw or not shame for financial instruments—their bases in highly speculative deals in the outstanding currency and stocks futures markets.

What is the ultimate purpose of financial intermediaries in the economy?

First, banks, insurance companies, fund managers and investment bankers are fiduciary trustees of savings accumulated by industries from cascades of earning the needs of people.

They are supposed to keep these savings, not lose them.

When Citibank, Morgan Stanley, AIG and hundreds of other financial intermediaries scale all heads-end billions of dollars of bad investments in a period of less than a year, they have spilled the milk of human confidence produced by hundred millions of investors throughout history.

Second, as trustees, financial market operators serve not just the investors who hand them their savings but also the real economy that produced the businesses that resulted in those savings.

The obligation of financial market operators ultimately is anchored to the fundamentals

TURN TO B2-1

TINTA AWARDS

The Philippine Press Awards

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The print race has begun and definitely no explosive one as the battle for the first-ever Philippine Press Awards, the Tinta Awards 2008, officially started the 2-day judging proper at its venue in Makati — The Manhattan Oriental Hotel. This print ad clash will be exceptionally tough for different advertising camps, media practitioners and advertisers, for their entries will be evaluated by world renowned creative honchos.

Three of the region's highly acclaimed generals in the advertising industry have landed the Philippine shores to judge the best among the best in print advertising.

They are John Hertfield, Creative at Large of TBWA Asia Pacific; Tay Guan Hin, Regional Executive Creative Director of JWT Asia; and Hemanth Taruparambaid, Worldwide Co-chairman of Creative Juice.

Attaking them in deciding on who will bring home the insignia for winning the top awards such as the Tinta Grand Prix and the Tinta Print Agency of the Year is a squad composed of the finest creative gurus in the Philippine advertising. These agency leaders include Raul Castro, Chief Creative Officer of McCann Worldgroup Philippines; Steve Chu, Executive Creative Director of Lowe Manila; Dave Ferrer, Executive Creative Director of JWT Philippines; David Guerrero, Chairman and Chief Creative Officer of BBDO Guerrero; Herbie Jayme, Chief Creative Officer of DMc Jayme/Ortiz; Melvin Mangada, Executive Creative Director of TBWA; Santiago Mangada Puno; Raoul Panes, Executive Creative Director of Leo Burnett Philippines and Leigh Rivera, Executive Creative Director of Y&R Philippines.

Win winners will be announced on the 15th of October, 2008 at the official Tinta Awards ballfield, the Manhattan Oriental Hotel.

The Tinta Awards 2008 is proudly sponsored by Philippines' top companies including Smart Communications, Samsung, Metrobank, Fuji Xerox, Manila de Oriental Hotel, Puregoyan & Amalio and Yehey!

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Mapping the Future

From page B1-7

of promoting and promoting the interests of the real economy that brought about their existence in the first place.

Third, the financial markets are NOT the engines of growth in any economy. The engine of growth is the real economy—the world's billions of people, past and present, who produce goods and services to satisfy man's hierarchy of needs.

Believing otherwise would lead people to cede to exchanges and buy and sell paper certificates whose values swing up and down with the varying degrees of exhilaration, hysteria and back-room manipulations in the markets.

Asset bubble

Or, this belief may encourage players in the real economy to borrow for projects that will end up in bubble bursting just because interest rates are cheap, as in the 1997 Asian crisis.

Fourth, in formulating investment strategies, financial operators must come back to the original purpose for which financial intermediaries have been created...to serve the real economy and people and to make these savings readily available back to the real economy and to people at least cost.

The fact is, there is diverse money to be made in this bearish rule, as has been made in at least the past millennium.

Conclusions

These principles inevitably lead us to the following conclusions in bringing back confidence and growth in the economy.

First, the cause of the financial crisis takes its roots in the abandonment by the financial intermediaries of their original, their original and true purpose of existence in the economy.

Trillions of dollars of the world's savings earned through centuries of work are placed in the hands of a powerful and brilliant few. They in turn channel these savings in stocks, futures, currency exchanges as well as securitized papers. They may even create separate conduits and entities for this purpose and register them in the Bahamas to escape supervision and taxes.

If the real economy is not directly benefited from these investments and the financial market operators deprive the real economy easy access to funds because they make more money from speculative investments, then they would be betraying their raison d'etre.

If the increase in the volume of these investments depend ultimately on the wealth or greed, get-rich-quick culture, human exhilaration or irresponsibility or mass hysteria, then they would be betraying their raison for being as fiduciary trustees of other people's money.

If financial intermediaries are allowed to place the world's savings in these investments, it would be like allowing your CPO to divert company funds from your usual operations and to "invest" them instead by playing roulette in the casino just because your CPO happens to be commanding or numbers with a brilliant mind for probabilities.

Real story

Well, this is the story of the 2008 financial crisis. And the magnitude of the losses have been so staggering that the US Congress had to enact a bailout law.

Second, the bailout law of the US Congress must address the abandonment by financial intermediaries of their original purpose of existence and provide sanctions and penalties on violators.

If this is not addressed, it would be like providing a fresh amount of $700 billion to your same CPO to save the company by closing in the same markets where he failed miserably.

No one can have confidence in that arrangement.

Third, the specific solutions to the crisis may lay between the theories of John Maynard Keynes who advocated the desirability of government intervention in the economy and of Milton Friedman who argued for the opposite.

In any case, the solution to the crisis needs to be translated from greedy people, both in private and government sectors who will use Keynes or Friedman for their selfish motives. As they say, even the devil can quote the Bible.

It is a wonder how many of those who recoil on the issue of the bailout in the US Congress belong to the realm of the devil.

Finally, to bring back confidence in the economy and in turn in the financial markets, **the real economy in the world must grow,** provide employment and control inflation.

It is the real economy that gave life to the financial markets. It will be the same real economy that will bring back life to the financial markets. The financial markets cannot save themselves.

Relevant strategies

The time may come when the government will stop spending its resources on saving the financial markets from the rest of their errors, will mark them as mark outs and will move on to the more productive endeavor of building up the real economy as a way to build up the financial markets.

It is time to study in greater depth the relevance in our times the strategies of President Franklin Roosevelt in overcoming the US depression that occurred immediately after the Wall Street Crash of 1929.

This is a very sad commentary on the re-

"The era of financial derivatives for self-serving investors must now come to an end"

sent financial crisis: The financial markets with the wealth of nations, technology and influence in their hands succeeded in engineering securitized certificates and highly complex financial instruments in the exchange but failed to use this same wealth, technology and influence in increasing production, providing innovation and generating aggregate demand in the real economy throughout the world.

The common explanation is this: it is far more convenient, more and faster to make money on derivatives in the exchange than to make money by putting up factories, research labs, roads, bridges and airports around the world.

And this is the irony of being rich.

When a man gets to be rich, he loses his sight of the fact that he became rich by serving people, by making his customers number one and by exploring uncharted frontiers where other customers abound.

As he matures the time value of money, he figures he will make faster money in the exchanges rather than in the exchange of real goods and services in the real economy.

He loses his touch of the opportunities that abound in the teeming populaces of Third World countries and underdeveloped economies where the demand for food, clothing, housing, education, infrastructure, transportation, information and communication technology, health and science facilities are boundless.

But people create demand. A billion people means a billion people demand.

What is needed is to trigger the supply to satisfy this demand. The process of matching supply with demand creates opportunities, employment, income and purchasing power. Those are created not just in underdeveloped economies but in the advanced markets where this capital—money, technology and education, machinery—comes from.

There is no bubble in that demand, no bubble in that supply, neither the demand and supply of securitized papers.

New capitalism

This is the new capitalism that has just simply returned to its roots—serving the needs of the real economy and people of the Third World and underdeveloped sectors of the economy.

I have you wondered, for example, about the role of the Thomasites in our economic development when they introduced democratic education in the Philippines at the break of 1900s?

Let the financial intermediaries who hold the wealth of nations in their hands apply their brilliance in engineering the development and matching of this demand and supply in Third World countries and underdeveloped sectors of economies.

The era of the financial derivatives for self-serving and self-seeking investors has burst in bubbles and must now come to an end.

We have arrived at the new frontiers of capitalism. And there is real money to be made to share for all.

(The views reflects the personal opinions of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Bloomgarmen Association of the Philippines. The author is an entrepreneur who wrote the books "The Jesse Ventura Ride: Why Are We So Mad?" and "The Philippine Economy: Do Our Leaders Have A Clue?" Feedback at mag@globelines.com.ph. For previous articles, please visit mag.org.ph)

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HONDA

Financial markets—Where to now?

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Jarvilo Augeles

THE DA GOVERNMENT HAS APPROVED the bailout. Where to now?

The bailout is a temporary relief to a disorder and caution brought about by a certain way of unprecedented economic growth alongside growing excess and unrestrained character flaws.

Unless we know the root causes that brought about this disorder, we would be like a doctor prescribing aspirin to a patient with a high fever and severe headache.

The US stock markets may indeed recover by 100 points for a week; a huge sigh of relief is heard from the Chicago Mercantile Exchange to the Philippine Stock Exchange; those in government who have been heavily engaged in financial speculations may now be jumping with joy.

But what next?

The big picture

What is the big picture all this?

There are two sides to the economy.

First, there is the real economy which produces real goods and services to satisfy human needs placed in a hierarchy by Abraham Maslow.

The growth of business in the real economy results in savings.

At first, these savings were small and were hidden under mattresses. As wealth accumulated from all sectors in the economy through the years, banks were formed to serve as depository of these savings as well as as a source of funds for those in business.

The accumulation of wealth from centuries of economic growth brought about the proliferation of all types of banks, insurance services, investment bankers, fund managers, mutual funds, hedge funds, etc. This became the second hub of the economy—the financial markets.

As working men created wealth, a group known as accumulated and created their wealth.

The existence of these financial markets had closely one purpose—to serve the real economy and people by gathering their savings and making this capital available back to the real economy and to people at less cost.

Leaders in the financial markets saw their this purpose was good.

And they said, "Let us create more financial instruments to the real economy and provide capital requirements and liquidity for those in need."

Thus, they conceptualized the idea of the corporations, legislated it as a form of business and developed the concept of shares of stocks, debentures and preferred shares. They also created bonds, treasury notes and bills, foreign exchange as vehicles for investing people's savings.

And they saw that it was good. And they said, "Let us now put up stock exchanges where corporations could raise funds to expand operations and where people with excess funds could invest their savings with greater yield. And they were extremely happy for bringing such great service to the economy and for making money in the process.

So long as financial markets operations were focused on this purpose, to serve the real economy, their relationship had symbiotic benefits.

But the 20th century severely changed that focus.

Deviations started to appear instead of serving the real economy, financial markets developed strategies to serve themselves at the expense of the real economy.

The first visible sign of deviation was the collapse of the US stock markets that started on Oct. 21, 1929 and continued on till Oct. 29, 1929—the Great Wall Street Crash.

There are interesting events in this crash that echo in current events.

The following data comes from Jeremy Siegelon and David Lambert's book, "Catastrophe and Crisis," published by Alder Books Ltd. in 1979.

First, the economy before the crash seemed to be booming, people had easy access to money and people were living in prosperity.

According to the book, "the availability of money was one of the reasons for the boom. Shares in the climbing market could

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BUSINESS Monday

Looking a lot like a not-so-merry Christmas

It will be a thin Santa for retailers

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT that the erratic global stock markets had reached their bottoms, and optimism had again worked its way back into the spooked investors' vocabulary, they plunge again ... and again ... and again ...

There are precious few signs that the steep and steady declines will stop anytime soon and the Philippines has not been spared from the bloodbath.

Share prices at the Philippine Stock Exchange have lost more than 50 percent of their value since the start of the year and the pall of gloom has led many retailers to companies to expect with much trepidation that Santa Claus may not be coming in town this year.

Or even if he is, given the Filipinos' love for the Christmas shopping season that accounts for about a fourth of most retail firms' annual revenues, his sack of presents may be not as big as last year's.

But then again, there are eternal optimists who believe that despite the pressing global issues, shopping will go on.

To get a better idea of how the Christmas season will likely turn out, Business Monday got in touch with a number of the leading experts in the retail industry who shared their views on the turmoil in the financial markets that promises to dramatically cut budgets for gifts this year.

"I don't think Christmas will be good for the retailer this year. While there are deals worth the avoiding, car loans that when Americans recover, we catch pneumonia. Our hope is that the OFWs, our heroes, do not get affected. In general, people will be more prudent about spending, buying only what is needed and doing away with the rest."

—Cecilia Ramos-Gozalo, National Book Store vice president for purchasing

"I expect Christmas to start late this year given the economic conditions. But shopping will still happen given the importance of Christmas in the Filipino shopper. Next year, cautious spending and belt-tightening will continue."

—Rowena Tretiakov, head of customer insights group of Ayala Land Inc.

"The changing economic environment and the current global financial crisis have definitely put a strain in our business. We are not exempted from feeling the effects of the skyrocketing prices of goods and services, and changes in consumer's purchasing power, especially among the middle- and lower-income class. More consumers today opt for other less expensive places to eat like selling stores and bakeries. This is why at McDonald's, we do our best to manage our operational costs so our prices do not change significantly in short periods of time and remain our customer base.

This coming Christmas season, we are very optimistic that our sales will grow even stronger. This is that time of the year wherein people treat themselves, our store offices and celebrate the spirit of the season, and we have seen an increase in spending since September. We are also confident with our marketing efforts and campaigns that promote the great tasting food that McDonald's provides its consumers at affordable prices."

—McDonald's Philippines

"I think Christmas sales will not be as good as last year. Our market consists of the upper echelon of society. Their people would obviously be affected by the substantial drop in equity values and the global financial turmoil. I am sure all of their investments are taking a beating and would definitely affect buying sentiment. That said, there could be people who will

LOOKING TO S

CECILIA RAMOS-GOZALO

JOSEPH LU Sun

Europeans get wise, creative in light of crisis

BERLIN—GUIDO SCHMIDT-WAGNER is trying on the offering photos of white sandy beaches and palm trees on display in the shop window of a Berlin travel agency, but right now he's not interested.

"I actually wanted to take my girlfriend to Spain in December, but I think we'll probably end up staying here," said the 27-year-old mechanic.

"I don't think prices have gone up, but with this credit crisis all over the media, it does make you wonder what's going to happen next," he said.

Like Schmidt, many Europeans say they are cutting down on nonessential spending on things like holidays, furniture, clothes and organic food, and trying to save by shopping at DIY and discount stores in the face of the financial turmoil.

But, on the other hand, the crisis is creating novel business openings including "credit crunch" chocolate bars and "meltdown parties."

And Spanish authorities are finding they can make ends meet by getting tougher on traffic offenses.

"There are certain things which I have cut down on—bottled water, for example," said German student Sarah Rösler. "It's scary to think that the credit crisis stuff is now actually influencing the way I live. Occasionally I would go shop in organic shops, but now I just think of it as a waste of money."

Moving back home

In Spain, media reported many young people were moving back to their parents' homes for financial reasons.

"I had to leave my flat, just when I'd got everything. Now here I am with my parents again," Mari Solecio, a 35-year-old who had just managed to buy a flat near Barcelona when he lost his job to a real estate agent, told El Pais daily.

Some 60 percent of Germans believe the economic outlook will worsen, a recent opinion survey by pollster Forsa said. In France, a IFOP poll showed 84 percent of voters had become more pessimistic over their financial situation in recent weeks.

Businesses ranging from luxury retailers to department stores, hotels and churches have reacted to feel the effect.

In Italy, Alba, a charity for abandoned children, said sweets about the banking system had led to a 20-percent drop in donations for children in orphanages.

Bastien Imbach, director of German online luxury auction house Ebbinventum, said rich people had already started to cut back on spending before the overseas crisis hit.

"It's clear that luxury products don't sell as well as they used to," he said.

In Britain, retailer John Lewis reported an 8.3-percent drop in monthly sales on Oct. 1.

But while many shops and consumers are suffering, others are putting on a brave face, even offering special meltdown deals.

London's Selfridges department store has put "credit crunch" chocolates on sale, while party outfitter Partyrama offers December-the-31st costumes online, including "Going through hell" paper-weights and "make money" coloring books.

"When life gives you a stash of worthless stock certificates, make party hats," the firm says. "For £8 per one(40 Euro, 60 US) you can fix cocktails Meltdown upon checkout."

Stewart Bolitho restaurants offer "credit crunch lunches" at special discounts. And money-conscious shoppers near the English town of Bexhill can barter homegrown produce for beer or pub.

But Europeans also seem to be cutting out fun.

Around three in four working people in Britain take lunch to work at least once a week, a recent BBC Good Food survey showed.

One ticket said they did this more often now than six months ago, with most naming the economic climate as the reason.

Boom for sales, bicycles?

Europeans' concerns about banks and personal finances could also benefit firms selling security devices and anti-theft goods.

Specialist companies in Paris have recorded booming sales of safes, Bolloré, which has been in the safe-making trade since 1928, said it had seen a more than 30-percent rise over past weeks since the collapse of investment bank Lehman Brothers.

"People are clearly saying that they are scared, that they want to empty their coffers, transform their money

AFP/DPA/AB, KG

Looking a lot like a not-so-merry Christmas

Front page, B1

decide to buy luxury cars instead of losing more value in the financial markets. They avoid think, instead of losing it in the financial markets, might as well spend some money and enjoy it."

—Gregorio To, trade chief of Mercedes-Benz distributor Mercedes Manila

"We are a conservative growth in sales this year versus last year as customers are believed to be more selective in their toy shopping and will be looking for ways to stretch the peso. However, most experts agree shoppers will still splurge on the child's before they reduce buying toys for children. The effect of the global turmoil will most likely be more evident when shoppers start making purchasing decisions. Already faced with high food and gas costs, the increase in the financial services could further spur shoppers to cut their spending and be selective in their toy shopping, focusing on less-expensive toys and considering toys with value. People will definitely work on a budget this year and are inclined to stay within that budget. As for categories, interactive toys and games, interactive toys and games like the Nintendo Wii will remain popular. A preference for relatively inexpensive toys will prevail."

—Celina S. Chua, Toys R Us general manager

"I started my business over 10 years ago at the beginning of the Asian financial crisis. So far, I have seen better gains sales every year during the Christmas season. I don't think that will change this year. My customers tend to be price inelastic and are cognizant and accepting of the rising costs."

—Ryan Sanchez, executive of bread manufacturer Village Gourmet

"Optimistic to have more sales than or at least equal that of last year because the brand is now available in more metro nationwide compared to 2007, so there are new markets and customers. The crisis may affect us in that customers might cut down on the number of pairs they buy or may opt for lower-priced ones."

—Anne Gonzalez, owner of Havaianas distributor Tony SA

"At French Bikes, we see still hopeful that Christmas sales will still be strong because of tradition and the introduction of new products. We will soon launch our 100-percent genie wheel brand, the patent wholly robust available to the market with the lowest glycemic index of GI for diabetics and weight watchers. Also, our new sliding mens frame will be introduced and will be adopted by a majority of our stores. Finally, there is a good chance that bread prices may be rolled back as a result of a dramatic fuel price adjustment by November as presently the local fuse outlook."

—Brock Ishay, CEO Alaska Milk

"We still see an upward trend that can become still more quality choices for consumers, prices are generally going down. We continue to be aggressive in terms of expansion to respond to the growing demand for investment appliances. But the global turmoil will have a negative impact on our business, especially on growth projects. People will be more price-conscious and would want to defer purchases of appliances. But then again, with a more aggressive and a more responsive pricing scheme, we are sure that customers will be able to fit our products into their budgets."

—Ryan Richard S. Sison, general manager of Technomax Appliances

"We are experiencing a 10-percent growth in our shopping center revenues and 15-percent increase in the bottom line than before this year. Oil and food crisis in the second and third quarter and the Wall Street meltdown will definitely impact on local Christmas shopping in general. We therefore, see for the industry a flat or zero-slightly down Christmas season but yess Mal Greenhills and Tomorrow have their unique value propositions and we, therefore, expect the 10-percent growth experienced in the first eight months to hold until the end of this year."

—Rey C. Dalisay II, Ortigas and Co. COO

"Surprisingly, sales are up versus last year. Topping the ranks are food service, clothing, shoes, home furnishings and appliances."

—Belle Bolaños, public relations officer for Araneta Center

"As of now, we are still hopeful that we will have better sales there over three months compared to last quarter, especially since we launched so many new models of cameras and printers. This is despite the global turmoil."

—Canon Philippines CEO Ramon Arbelbide

"As reported, Christmas is the peak season for Goldilocks. In fact, our company has become almost synonymous with this special occasion. Thankfully, our customers have always expressed their love to you, and we expect this trend to continue. No matter how challenging the times may be, we will always have a reason to celebrate and to thank God for the blessings He showered us throughout the year. Although there has been a slowdown in most of our products lines, I believe that Filipinos will exhibit grace under pressure. And in fact, our country has been largely spared from the economic slump. Part of what makes us Pinoy is the incorrigible manner in which we commemorate our historical milestones. I don't think that will change this early."

—Goldilocks marketing director Patty Yee

"We cannot deny the fact that what is happening worldwide will have an impact on us. However, Christmas is a celebration that is part of our lives in the Philippines and we hope that this will be a good year."

—SM group vice president Millie Dizon

"For PC sales, fourth quarter sales are generally less than previous quarters because of Christmas spending on lower-priced items. Yes, the global financial turmoil may affect consumers' purchasing power. The highest cost of living affects spending behavior."

—Acer marketing manager Agnes Espino

"I guess there is going to be a great struggle for the consumers' wallet. The lower disposable income, the worse it is going to be. A good season to be positive is that projected OFW remittances will, at least, remain steady to us representing dollar obtaining, meaning more peso to spend compared to last year."

—Chito Sta. Ongpal of Unilever

"Sales will surely be down due to the global turmoil. The continue pace of crude oil and the dollar value will be the main factors. If the dollar continues to surge, all commodity prices will go up, buying power of consumer will decline. Consumers are more conscious about their buying priorities. Sales to the third quarter are 20-percent down compared to last year. The financial crisis in the United States might worsen and the recession will thus affect the world market. The OFWs in the US will further cut their remittances."

—Steven Ching, owner of children's toys and apparel distributor Characters Inc.

"Sales will probably decline due to consumers bell tightening."

—Bienvenido Bautista, senior vice president of Universal Robina Corp.

"Sales will be definitely lower as most people will cut on spending out of necessity first, all will still celebrate Christmas even in a reduced way."

—Rolando Claudio, owner of Toby's sports chain

"Based on current sales figures, we think that the industry can hit its forecast of 120,000 units this year, which is higher than 2007. As of September, we have registered a 12-percent growth year to date, so to the effect of the global turmoil, we will still have to see if it will have a direct impact on the last quarter sales."

—Hernar Meneses, executive director of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc.

REX C. DELACRUZ

ROWENA Tomokat

Internet to deliver 100,000 jobs to Subic by 2010

By Robert Gonzaga
Inquirer Central Luzon

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—SUBIC BAY Metropolitan Authority officials have pinned their hopes on an online job matching system to reach the agency's target of 100,000 new jobs in the free port by 2010.

SBMA Administrator Armand Arreza said the system seeks to address the issue of job-skill mismatch and employment gaps.

"At the same time, it ensures prompt and human handout in the free port of readily available human resources with the skills and work background they need for their projects," he said.

Developed by iWOWCast inc., a firm that recently launched the first Internet-based job fair in the free port, the system is designed to allow for the posting and skills classification of available manpower.

Veronica Quilon, iWOWCast Inc. president, said the whole job-hunting process has now been reduced to accomplishing a form that is uploaded to a database at www.jobfit.com, where applicants can enroll themselves at free featured services.

These include online job search, online matching, online forum where job seekers and employers may negotiate, data center support service and a short message service (SMS), which sends text messages about job openings that match user's qualifications.

"So far, 65 employers offering more than 20 job types have sent close to 1,000 job orders through the online job-skills matching system," Quilon said.

Ramon Agregado, SBMA senior deputy administrator for support services, said that with the iWOWCard system, digital information on applicants could be sent to job-requesting employers who could inform job seekers on the status of their application through SMS notification.

"We are always stepping up efforts to sign in more businesses—BPOs (business process outsourcing), call centers, manufacturing—just about anything to match the abundant labor force in the Greater Subic Area, which includes Olongapo City, Zambales and Bataan," Agregado said.

In a statement, the SBMA said the Internet-based job fair was held in Zambales last Oct. 4 to be followed in Bataan on Oct. 15.

Similar job fairs will be held in the Clark Freeport and Olongapo areas, SBMA said.

SBMA officials said the agency has started linking with local colleges and universities to help them develop curricula to fit the overall development plans for Subic Freeport and Central Luzon.

"With technology on our side—and considering that for the past two years, SBMA has been averaging from 8,000 to 10,000 new jobs annually—the goal for 100,000 jobs by 2010 is achievable," Agregado said.

SBMA turns to cyberspace for help

BANCO DE ORO (BDO) credit card payments for MasterCard, Visa, American Express and JCB will now be accepted in MegaLink ATMs nationwide. MegaLink president and CEO Benjamin P. Cuyegkeng (second from left) presents the contract to BDO senior vice president Ophelia Carmela. Withdrawn are (from left) MegaLink vice president Bernadette Ramos, BDO senior assistant vice president Ronna Lacsamana and BDO manager Jenn Reyes.

Upgrade your business with new telco package

PLDT SME NATIONS MYDSL Bizfirst PC Program aims to address growing demands of small businesses at minimal cost.

"This package is perfect for growing businesses or those thinking of moving soon. Growing businesses become more productive and profitable while updates are at once organized and on-track," Kit Lucio-Bernardo, PLDT SME nation VP and head said.

PLDT myDSL Biz speeds for internet connection has burst speeds ranging from 3.5Mbps to 5Mbps.

The speed is sufficient for businesses with multiple computer setups or high bandwidth demands.

The PLDT myDSLBiz Free PC Program comes with up to four free PCs and one laptop set to form a complete computer setup.

The PLDT myDSLBiz Free PC Program is bundled into cost-conscious packages plus that goes for as low as P4,000 a month.

PLDT SME Nation is the telecommunications giant's business division that offers business solutions to growing, as well as upstart business ventures, through custom products and services.

These include Voice, Broadband Internet, Managed Networks and Mobile/Wireless services.

Its vision is for Filipino entrepreneurs to become globally competitive via the latest ICT platforms.

It provides access services by bundling business-enabling devices, such as computers, switches, access points, wireless card payment terminals, software applications and content, tools to enable inventory management and delivery and online solutions builders.

For more details, log on to www.pldtsmenation.com.ph.

BDO rewards members get freebies

FROM SEPT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2008, all BDO Rewards members get free tickets to qualified purchases at SM Science Discovery Center and Imax Theater Premium cinema. Rewards card and avail of these offers.

Emerald cardholders get a free ticket when they buy four; Ruby gold one free ticket when they buy three tickets; Sapphire and the initial BDO Rewards Elite card holders (with) get a free ticket for every two bought tickets. Diamond cardholders get one free ticket when they buy one ticket.

Present your BDO Rewards card when you buy and claim original film tickets and get one free.

BDO Rewards is the BDO's comprehensive loyalty program that rewards valued clients with IM shopping points for qualified bank transactions.

Europeans get wise...

From page B3-1

note gold to pick up their old Napoleons (gold coins) and trade it all away in a sale," said Hugo Gerstein, salesperson at Solex.

"It goes from EUR600 per ounce to EUR900. See," he said.

Environmentalists hope economic worries in European will also nudge their highest cars into bicycles to save money.

With petrol most expensive, the sale of bicycle parts in Germany rose by some 20 percent earlier this year, said Karsten Hoene from the ADFC cycling association.

"People get their old bikes out of the cellar and had them fixed," he said, adding he did not rule out the financial crisis meaning more money-conscious German customers. "However, I doubt the size would be the thing Germans will give up. They'd probably rather cut down on food first."

But Paris filmmaker David Bann was unconvinced. Being relatively poor in the first place, he had little to lose.

"I'm pretty broke and have no investments or I'm not that worried," said the 29-year-old. "That said, stocks have fallen so low, so maybe now's the time to buy a few."

Is the Philippines' real estate boom ending?

By Prince Christian Cruz
chief economist,
Global Property Guide

THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL TURmoil and high inflation have slowed down the Philippines raging real estate boom. Although luxury condominium prices continue to rise, the residential sector is definitely slowing.

The average price of luxury units in downtown condominiums in Metro Manila rose 13.33 percent in the second quarter of 2008 from a year earlier. Adjusted for inflation, residential prices increased only 5.1 percent over the year.

The slowdown comes on the heels of a recovery from the Asian Crisis. Condo prices rose by an average of 14.1 percent (11.2 percent in real terms) in 2007, following a rise of 8.1 percent in 2006 and 2008. (around 2 percent in real terms), according to data from Colliers International.

Demand from Overseas Filipinos, which contributed strongly to the rise in residential real estate prices, is now increasing due to exchange rate movements and the global financial turmoil.

A slight slowdown in economic growth and higher interest rates are also pulling housing demand down.

It was in 2006 that the Philippine real estate sector started recovering from the slump brought on by the 1997 Asian Crisis. But condominium prices are now rising all over Manila, as prices and rents will likely stabilize in the second half of 2008, and inflation-adjusted prices are likely to fall. If the global financial situation continues to deteriorate, nominal prices falls in 2009 can be expected.

Memories of Asian Crisis

Among all the economies affected by the 1997 Asian Crisis, it was the Philippines which experienced the biggest property price falls. A speculative bubble had formed in the 1990s after financial liberalization and economic reforms had attracted capital inflows. Luxury condominium prices rose 65 percent (46 percent in real terms) between 1993 and 1997.

During the Asian crisis, Philippine luxury condominium prices dropped 18 percent (25.5 percent in real terms) from 1997 to 1998. However, 1997 and 2004 luxury condominium prices dropped 58.2 percent in real terms (24.36 percent nominal). Despite gains from 2005 to 2007, property prices are now still 50 percent below their 1995 peak, in real terms.

Demand for office space for information and communications technology (ICT) related firms, such as call centers and other business process outsourcing (BPO) firms, have provided the spark to revive the slumbering real estate sector. BPO employees have boosted the demand for retail banking and other products, creating a ripple effect on the construction, retail and telecommunications industries.

Overseas Filipino demand slows

A law passed in 2003 allowed Filipinos who have acquired foreign citizenship to become dual citizens, in turn permitting them to acquire land in the Philippines. The new law also softened the age between foreign and local ownership allowed in condominiums.

From 2006 to 2007, most real estate developers reported that demand from overseas Filipinos (OFs) comprised the bulk of their buyers. Around 70 to 80 percent of new condominiums in Metro Manila and subdivisions in Cavite, Laguna, Bicol and Batangas were bought or reserved by an overseas Filipino or their family.

However, demand from OFs is now starting to wane. Developers have recently revealed that only about 20 to 30 percent of their buyers are now OFs.

Foreign exchange movements have played a significant role. Against the dollar, the peso has appreciated from around P55 (2003-2005), to an average of P51 in 2006 and P46 in 2007. As the peso appreciated, overseas Filipinos' foreign exchange buy less and less in the Philippines.

Although the peso has depreciated to around P46 in September from P40.67 in February 2008, the change is barely enough to cover the increase in the cost of local overhead in the Philippines.

Around 70 percent of permanent overseas Filipinos are in the United States, 11 percent are in Canada with some in Australia (6 percent), Europe (6 percent) and Japan (3 percent). These countries are seriously affected by the global economic slowdown, with recession looming in the United States and much of Europe. The financial meltdown has seriously affected the desire for more investments, especially as property plays such a significant role in the crisis.

Overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) are also experiencing problems. Almost half the OFWs work in the Middle East, where soaring house rents and food prices are fueling runaway inflation.

Almost 30 percent of the OFW's income is spent on housing, whether to buy a new house, fix present homes or pay rent. OFW remittances reached $14.45 billion in 2007 and are expected to reach $16 billion in 2008. A squeeze on OFW remittances could have a significant impact on the Philippine property market.

Limited mortgage options

For the real estate mortgage market to grow, demand from local buyers needs to strengthen. In other countries, a housing market boom is usually accompanied by a mortgage boom, i.e., most property purchases are financed by loans. In the Philippines, most buyers pay cash or finance by penalling.

The ratio of real estate loans to GDP has dropped somewhat since 1997. In 2007, real estate loans from the banking system were only 4.3 percent of GDP, down from 7.5 percent of GDP in 1998, though in nominal terms real estate loans have risen from P240 ($ 5.42 billion in 2004, to P261 ($6.31 billion in 2007.

In December 2007, the BSP relaxed rules on real estate lending to support the property industry, following mortgage loan growth of a mere 1.4 percent in 2007, significantly down on the 20-40 percent increase in 2006.

Housing loan rates charged by banks remain high, despite falling base interest rates. Mortgage rates from major commercial banks are around 9.75 percent for loans fixed for one year and 11 percent or more for mortgages with rates fixed for five years or more. Developers charge no higher mortgage interest rates, ranging from 12 percent to 16 percent.

While the government-owned Pag-IBIG Fund (Home Development Mutual Fund) offers a much lower interest rate, at 6 percent to 7 percent, and better loan conditions (longer payment periods and higher loan-to-value ratios), the amount that can be borrowed is much lower and there are certain membership requirements. The coverage of government housing loan programs is extremely limited.

Oversupply looms

Condominiums are now rising all over Metro Manila. In contrast, the impact of the previous pre-Asian Crisis boom was only visible in the central business districts of Makati and Ortigas. Currently, instead of just pockets of developments, condominiums are being planned and built along the entire stretch of Edsa, along major highways and the different lines of the mass transport system. Several subdivisions are also being developed in nearby provinces such as Bicol, Bulacan, Cavite and Laguna.

With demand waning and the economy weakening, the market could see significant oversupply when these projects are completed. Around 10,500 new residential condo units are expected to be completed in 2009-2010, according to Colliers International. That is on top of the more than 6,300 units to be completed in 2008.

Potential buyers should also be wary of the problems involved in buying in the Philippines. Potential problems include fraudulent titles, inconsistent property valuation, cumbersome land administration and lengthy property registration processes.

Potential buyers should be wary of problems buying in the Philippines, which could include fraudulent titles, inconsistent property valuation, cumbersome land administration and lengthy property registration processes

ONE GOOD time for property developers coming to an end? Business may, Some say yes, others say not yet. JOEY ARCEGA

Economic slowdown

The recent real estate boom was supported by strong economic growth. After growing by an average of 5.2 percent from 2002 to 2003, the economy expanded by 5.45 percent in 2006 and 7.2 percent in 2007, its highest growth rate in more than two decades.

GDP growth in 2008 is expected to dow to just 4.2-4.5 percent, pushed down by a combination of higher interest rates and inflation, slower remittance growth and falling business and consumer confidence.

In August 2008, inflation reached 12.3 percent, the highest rate in 17 years. Overall inflation in 2008 is expected to be around 9.7 percent, a sharp contrast to the 2.7 percent inflation in 2007.

Rising prices of food and oil—most in the world market have also pushed construction costs. In mid-2008, property developers raised the selling price of their projects by 10-20 percent.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, the country's central bank, raised key policy rates in 2008 to rein in inflation. The overnight borrowing rate was raised by a total of 300 basis points in just three months, to 6.1 percent in August 2008.

With the economy slowing down combined with higher interest rates and a looming housing oversupply, the housing market is expected to slow down further in the future. While a repeat of house price falls similar to that of Asian Crisis is highly unlikely, the Philippines housing market remains fragile, at best.

(For more info, check www.globalpropertyguide.com.)

BUSINESS Monday

PERSONAL FINANCE FOR ENTREPRENEURS

When mixing pleasure and business doesn't work

Ma. Salve Dajilo
Contributor

SMALL BUSINESSES THAT SPLINTER IN the sari-sari are a common sight in the Philippines' entrepreneurial world, and many of the problems begin with how entrepreneurs handle their personal funds.

Many business owners are good in business, but not in handling money—a tragedy many because business and money naturally and ideally go together. But considering the following common attributes that make a businessman, in some cases, loser in managing personal wealth and investing.

First, they are aggressive and are bound to put in personal money in something that may have very uncertain results. Second, they fall in love with an idea and put their heart and soul into it even if it doesn't make any money. Third, their flexibility, which allows them to grow their business, makes them mix personal money with business money. Fourth, they like to do things their way and don't take advice very well.

Advice No. 1: Keep personal and business funds separate

Melvin Esteban, a registered financial planner and president of Bestowing Minds, says the first order of the day is to keep business and personal funds separate.

"It has to be very clear that whatever you use for the business should be for the business. You have to know if you are making money or not," he says.

Entrepreneurs' typical mentality is to use a single wallet, figuratively speaking, for both business and personal expenses. "At the start of the day, the owner comes to and whatever he needs to pay he will pay from the same wallet. What remains is the profit. What he didn't use is then in the middle of the day, when his daughter or his wife needed cash, he took the cash from his pocket," Esteban explains.

For entrepreneurs to expand their business, it is crucial that they know exactly how much money he is making. He doesn't have to be an accountant to do that.

Esteban recommends taking advantage of technology to draw a clear line between business and personal funds. "Use an Excel worksheet if you are not techie-savvy and list down how much come in and how much come out. You will see on a day-to-day basis if you are making money. You can also use Quicken for home and Quicken for business. These are very simple accounting tools. You will instantly see where you are spending too much," Esteban said.

Advice No. 2: Balance your risks

Entrepreneurs can only expand so much. They have to know what size of business they can manage. "Sometimes you might be too big that it can become detrimental than advantageous to you. When it comes to personal finances, you also have to set aside money in lower risk investment, because any business is considered high risk," Esteban says.

Balancing cash flow will require that business owners should earn from both their entrepreneurial and personal investments. "That's the difference between man at work and man's money at work," he says. "Investing means your money is working to make you more money."

This also involves saving aside enough money for the rainy day. Entrepreneurs who are highly committed to their businesses may be tempted to put all their money in their business. That's akin to a cock-fighting enthusiast who bets the farm.

"Sang buwis matulis ka, lahat lalo," says Esteban.

Advice No. 3: Keep a long-term perspective

"Most entrepreneurs strike big, means you flow like honey. But then comes cloud-nastiness is also the customary of business."

"Almost always the number one problem that businessmen face is their retirement. You have to make sure that you set aside some of your profit, say 10 percent. Fix your retirement. If you are not doing that and you are depending on your business to make you retire rich, you and your business are in the same boat. You are exposing yourself too much when all your money is in the business," Esteban says.

Business owners should know when to pay themselves, and this money should be kept both in a six-month worth of emergency fund and in a retirement fund. "So, even if your business is not making any more, you have your nest egg," Esteban added.

Advice No. 4: Get professional managers

In business, getting professional managers can allow an entrepreneur to expand and grow the business and keep it stable. Unfortunately, some entrepreneurs don't like to seek counsel.

In personal finances, it is not a bad idea to get a professional manager to handle your savings and investments. Entrepreneurs can keep doing what they are good at, and get someone to grow their money for them.

At the end of the day, managing businesses and personal funds can work together to preserve wealth, even amid the surrounding governments. It just takes proper use of fundamental characteristics that can either turn an entrepreneur into a success—or a loser.

(E-mail the author at lightdesire@gmail.com. For more personal finance articles, visit Moneybeats at http://blogs.inquirer.net/moneybeats/.)

Tips for small entrepreneurs

1. Keep personal and business funds separate
2. Balance your risks
3. Keep a long-term perspective
4. Get professional managers

MELVIN ESTEBAN

Going around Tacloban on 'Icot-Icot' tour

By Vivencio Lubre
Regional Magazine

TACLOBAN CITY— If you're in Tacloban and would like to have a quick tour of the historical and religious places of interest in the city and its environs, just hop on the "Icot-Icot" vehicle.

The "Icot-Icot" tour will provide you a three-hour guided tour of Tacloban and some nearby towns at very affordable prices.

Launched in September 2007, the Icot-Icot tour was first operated on weekends, says Soliera Hagana, head of the Leyte Tourism and Investment Promotion Center.

A brainchild of Leyte Gov. Carlos Jericho L. Petilla, the "Icot-Icot" tour was conceived to provide visitors, and even the locals, an opportunity to visit tourist destinations in the city and nearby towns through a group tour.

The term "Icot-Icot" came from the Tagalog word "ikot-ikot," which means going around, and from the governor's nickname, "Icot."

Hagana says the local government decided to make the tour available on weekdays due to the growing demand.

The tour fee is P300 for the morning trip and P350 for the afternoon trip because that would include a visit to a bazaar-like resort in Babatngon, Leyte. The fee already includes the ride, tour guide and the entrance fees at the Sto. Niño Shrine and at the farm resort.

The "Icot-Icot" vehicle, aimed to a multitude that can accommodate around 20 persons, leaves the PTR Plaza in Tacloban City at 9 o'clock for the morning trip and 2 o'clock for the afternoon tour.

From the plaza, the vehicle goes to Justice Romualdez Street and passes through the CAP building, formerly the Price Mandaue, where Imee, Daughter Marcos-Ver resided and put up his headquarters during after the landing of the Allied Liberation Forces at Red Beach, Palo, Leyte on Oct. 20, 1944.

At the corner of Imee Marcos Street, the car turns right to the Bolinao Residence, a two-storey wooden mansion along Veteran Street, where President Sergio Osmeña resided at the early part of the Liberation campaign during World War II.

Going west ahead, the vehicle also passes by the Provincial Capitol, which is also a historical building because it was here where General MacArthur and President Osmeña announced that Tacloban was the temporary seat of the Commonwealth government.

The country would finally be liberated about three days after the landing in Leyte in 1944.

Turning right to Magsaysay Boulevard, the car passes several government buildings, such as the Eastern Visayas Regional Medical Center, Bohol-gan ng Kasaysayan and University of the Philippines in the Visayas, Tacloban campus.

Also along the boulevard are places of interest such as the Family Park; statues of the Image of the Crucified Christ; statue of Maria Kalinaw, an Asian tradition that symbolizes peace; Philippine-Japan Peace Park and the Balite-an Fountain.

Further ahead, on Real Street is the Sto. Niño Church, the main Catholic Church in the city; the People's Center and Library and the Sto. Niño Shrine and Heritage Museum.

THE STO. NIÑO Shrine and Heritage Museum in Tacloban City. Built by former first lady Imelda Romualdez Marcos, the museum houses, among others, of priceless works of art from the Philippines and abroad.

A GIANT painting of the beautiful first lady, Imelda Romualdez Marcos, hangs on one of the walls of the spacious dance hall at the second floor of the Sto. Niño Shrine and Heritage Museum.

PHOTOS BY VIVENCIO LUBRE/PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER/INFRA

On the way to the park, the vehicle passes by the city's new Astrodome and the Boy Scout Headquarters, which was put up in 1995 and said to be the first monument of its kind.

Then the tour proceeds to the San Juanico Bridge, located more than 20 kilometers away for the last brief stopover.

Then the vehicle goes back to the city proper where the tour ends.

Tour guide Fiona Grimm says many of their customers are out-of-towners and some foreigners but that locals also join the tour.

"This is the kind of tour where they can go to many places at the least expense," he says, adding that the tourists have enjoyed the "Icot-Icot" trips during their one year of operation.

This has encouraged the government to soon expand the tour services.

Movements

New PHAP executive director

THE PHARMACEUTICAL AND Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP) announced the appointment of Reiner Ghee as executive director and PHAPCare Foundation vice president. Ghee continues to be instrumental in providing accessible quality medicines to Filipinos and plans to implement revenue-generating community projects through PHAPCare. As chair of the ethics committee, Ghee also oversees the implementation of the Code of Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices among PHAP members. He has been with the country's pharmaceutical industry since 1978.

eTelecare's SVP is new CCAP president

BENEDICT C. HERNANDEZ, a 15-year Global Solutions senior vice president and general manager for Philippine operations, was recently elected president of the Contact Center Association of the Philippines (CCAP).

Hernandez, a CCAP founding board member who also served as its first chair, is one of the country's Ten Outstanding Young Men. He was also recognized by the Philippine government as ICT champion for his leadership efforts in developing the industry.

Today, Hernandez has the opportunity to even-load-track industry-building efforts through capacity promotion, international linkages, trade events, university partnerships for talent development, employee welfare and retention initiatives, industry-wide collaboration.

CCAP is the oldest BPO association in the country and counts 44 contact center members that represent about 60 percent of the country's seats.

Globe has new regulatory affairs chief

GLOBE TELECOM INC. HAS reported a new senior executive tasked to deal with regulators.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange on Wednesday, Globe said that its board of directors have confirmed the appointment of lawyer Ezekiel D. Gonzales as head of corporate and regulatory affairs and member of the senior executive group.

Gonzales replaced lawyer Rosalita R. Balatbat, who has retired from the company but will continue as chief legal counsel of the company.

Turning novel ideas into innovative technology

WITH NON-DISEASE CROPping up even before medical experts could detect the causes of existing illnesses, companies in the healthcare industry are on a mission to turn novel ideas into effective and innovative technologies designed to benefit patients through early detection.

One such business investing heavily on transformational medical technologies and services aimed at shaping a new age of patient care is GE Healthcare, a $17-billion unit of GE (General Electric) that employs more than 46,000 people and services healthcare professionals and patients in more than 100 countries.

From surgery, scans, consumer devices, money and information, GE's diversified interests also include health, particularly diagnostic equipment, medical imaging, patient monitoring systems, disease research, drug discovery and biopharmaceuticals. CEO vision is to create a new "early health" model of care focused on early diagnosis, pre-symptomatic disease detection and disease prevention. By screening the disease at its earliest stage, patients save thousands of pesos in health expenditures and are spared from undergoing tedious and often painful treatments.

As more of prevention is, after all, more potent than any existing drug in the market, a preventive approach in health-disease matrix while at the same time helping clinicians to treating patients with more precise targeted therapies," points out Lynda.

It responds to different industries, from manufacturing to food, commercial, industrial and retail. Unites together with his group, has quite a challenge in synergizing and expanding business verticals in the country amid a flat economy. But they are banking on great products, a pool of experienced people and effective internal and external business relationships. "We strive to make our team the best in the region. Our goal for GE Healthcare Clinical Systems in the Philippines is to double its revenue in the next three years."

The efforts of the local team group were rewarded recently when they received a deal with one of the top hospitals in the country for 16 units of Engstrom ventilators and ultrasound equipment. According to Linhe, the deal was sealed through sheer determination over an 18-month period and is, to the, the largest single installed base for the Engstrom Care System in Southeast Asia.

LINHE

It's the school that matters

By Ronin-Ron Ortega, Carissa Diana Ortiber and Andrew Gordon Mier
Contributors

"SEE MEN ARE CREATED equal."

Coined by Thomas Jefferson, this statement echoes throughout the centuries to make a case for the inherent equality of men. Yet, a such ideal really practiced, especially in employment? We explored recruitment profiles of companies to explore this question.

The Big 3

Job ads for entry-level managerial position posted in the Internet, newspaper and job magazines were examined. Out of the 142 gathered job ads, 37 percent implicitly expressed preference for particular schools, stating they are looking for graduates of "reputable or prestigious" schools.

Another 9 percent expressed explicit preference for graduates from particular schools namely Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University and the University of Philippines. Some ads also included University of Santo Tomas and University of Asia and the Pacific in their renewed preferred schools.

Interviews with managers and HR officers showed that these schools are preferred on the basis of the company's good experience with the graduates of these schools who are currently or have worked for the company in the past.

In some cases, executives and managers give specific instructions that they want to hire graduates of certain schools for certain positions.

Their preference often stems from the performance of applicants in the company's recruitment processes such as interviews and tests.

Graduates of the Big 3 usually perform exceptionally well in interviews. They say that limiting their pool of applicants is an efficient way of getting the best applicants.

The bottom line

There are thousands of graduates every year looking for jobs, and some are rejected by companies not because there are no jobs available but because they think those graduates are not good enough.

This kind of practice is reminiscent of perpetuating the gap between classes, particularly between those who can afford premium education and those who cannot. Oftentimes, those who attend those reputable schools are those who can pay for the high tuition fees or those from families of those schools.

Thus, those who graduates from these schools are deemed more competent and qualified for entry-level managerial positions which open opportunities for higher paying jobs.

On one hand, the results pose a challenge to schools that are deemed prestigious to maintain the quality of their education. On the other, the challenge to non-reputable schools would be to answer their education to ensure the competitiveness of their graduates. They may wish to build their niche to ensure they are strong in such programs that is employers.

This kind of discrimination works to the advantage of graduates of premiere universities. They have better job opportunities and earn easily particularly the corporate ladder. Graduates of non-reputable schools, meanwhile, find it difficult to penetrate the corporate world. However, it is not a hopeless case for these graduates.

Some managers mentioned that they hire honor students from non-reputable schools since they are as competent as those who graduated from premier universities. If a student from a regular college will study hard and receive honors, companies will give her a second look.

These graduates will need to exert extra effort to be noticed and to get a chance to contend with reputable school graduates in the job market.

(K. Ortega is currently finishing her Master's Degree in Guidance Psychology at the Ateneo. C. Ortiber is a medical student at the Ateneo School of Medicine and Public Health. A. Mier is also pursuing medicine in UST. Reflection about this article please e-mail communeg@gmail.com.ph)

WORKPLACE WISDOM

What's sexy in tech? Big & boring or maybe nothing

FEATURES IN BRIEF

HBC receives award

HDE, A PERSONAL CARE COMPANY got the title of Top Employer at the recently concluded 2008 Social Security System (SSS)-Bankard Inc Awards.

HDC has bested other companies for the trophy and is the Central NCR-, Eagle-styled category. Representing the company during the awarding ceremonies was VP for executive management, Ms. Ruby C. Fabros. The award was presented by SSS Secretary Romulo Neri and BCH Secretary Francisco Duque III, and Sen. Joe Magsaysay was the guest of honor. The by-one-win companies from various industries have also been given over the in their respective categories during the ceremonies.

The Bankard Bayan award is an honor given by SSS to companies, individuals and organizations who encourage, clarify, uphold the welfare and well-being of their employees through proper implementation of programs as should, such as updating of record books, regular contributions, coverage and giving out of benefits in some lines.

School hosts social entrepreneurship talk

"SOMEBODY'S YOUR CANDLE LORD nothing when it lights another," said John Maxwell. Known as America's expert in leadership whose messages can be associated with social entrepreneurship. The focus of the business lecture series and CEO forum held at Southville Intl. School and Colleges (SISC) Las Piñas last Sept. 24. Pastor Fernandez and Cheska Belle, consultant on business plan presentation for production and product development respectively of Flags 2 Riches Inc., a social enterprise engaged in a business that helps society members in Payatas, served as speakers.

Young entrepreneurs meet set

THE YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS Group of Asia-Pacific (Yeg Ap) under the Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Cacci) will be hosted by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry on Oct. 22.

Yeg Ap, created by entrepreneur Ito Mario Pompei, aims to serve as a springboard for projects and activities geared towards encouraging young entrepreneurs in the Asia-Pacific Rim.

The Yeg Ap breakfast session will be held during the 22nd Cacci Conference from Oct. 22 to 23 at the Manila Hotel. Young entrepreneurs from Bangladesh, Hong Kong (China), India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam are expected to attend the Yeg Ap.

Jose Ma. Concepcion, presidential adviser on entrepreneurship and president of RFM Corp., will address the session as keynote speaker. Guest speakers include Rizza Jacob, founder of Kidnyan Post and Centrio Tennessa Pvt., Ltd. (India); Anisul Alam Jamal, founder of HB Group of Cos. (Bangladesh); and Mohammad Lutfur Rahman, chair of the International Finance Investment & Commerce Bank Ltd. (Bangladesh).

AFI holds franchise show

THE ASSOCIATION OF FILIPINO FRANchisors Inc. (AFI) held one of its most successful period franchise shows ever at the World Trade Center in Pasay City last Sept. 19-21. Hundreds of prospective franchisees were already queuing up outside the venue even before the doors could be opened to the public. Inside, at least all the 80 AFI members were waiting for them to showcase successful homegrown franchise businesses with track records of stability and consistent growth.

"We talked to some of the prospective entrepreneurs and they said they wanted to look at more business opportunities locally as their safe way of investing their savings in view of the recent financial meltdown in the United States. With some major local banks and financial institutions having collapsed or bankrupted or Lehman Brothers, Merrill Lynch and AIG, they would much prefer to continually look after their investment with companies who have survived the financial crisis. And they view franchising as the most promising business opportunity at the moment. Less than a week to election fever, AFI president Rommel Juan of Bonchon Pizza Pasta.

The profile of AFI's membership shows that AFI member companies have been in the business for an average of 10 years.

AFI is now composed of 80 companies in franchising.

NEW YORK—WHEN IBM U.S. joined investors with an unexpectedly strong preliminary earnings report Wednesday night, some hoped it might throw a lifeline to the technology sector amid sinking financial markets.

But such optimism quickly faded on Thursday as fears of a global recession dragged down almost all tech stocks, with even IBM itself ending down 3.7 percent.

While that is not bad in that climate, when the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 7 percent Thursday, even investors bold enough to bet on a bounce for technology are playing it safe. They say only a handful of the biggest and most steady companies could hold up during that upheaval.

Some like Intel Corp. and Microsoft Corp. along with IBM, seeing they are better buys now than just year's darlings like Apple Inc. or Google Inc., which both still trade at relatively expensive valuations.

"It's sometimes tough to jump in front of the oncoming train, but at some point people have to," said Zach Kostenbaum, an analyst at Pacific Heritage Wealth Management. "I would definitely say, with the biggest names here, Microsoft, IBM, Hewlett-Packard, Boeing names, but that's where I would be."

International Business Machines Corp., the world's largest computer services company, posted on Wednesday a higher-than-expected 20-percent rise in third-quarter profit and affirmed its outlook for the full year.

The news initially pushed up IBM and other tech stocks, but the rally proved unsustainable on Thursday as the broader US market fell for a seventh straight session. The S&P 500 Information Technology index ended down 5.43 percent.

Even IBM, with its appealing corporate earnings rates, solid dividend and recurring profit stream, failed to completely win over investors. Its profit beat expectations but revenue growth was relatively weak, coming on a heels for IBM and what is evidence about the rest of the technology sector.

"This is a company that has a much larger amount of recurring revenues than other companies. They also are in every part of the world," said Rosenvelt, whose firm owns IBM, Microsoft, HP and Intel shares. "If they can't grow anything, I find it hard to believe other companies will be able to."

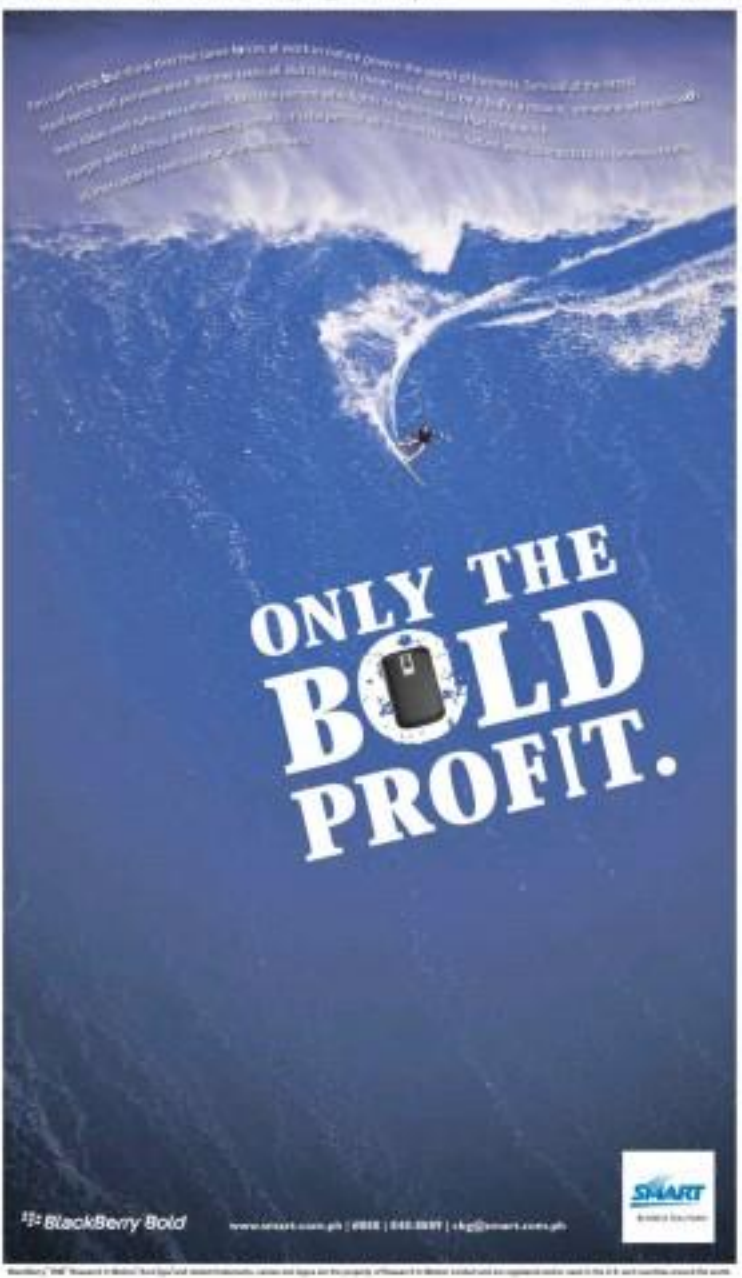
Analysts cautioned that many tech companies do not share IBM's advantages—stable, tech-savvy emerging markets, and steady income from services and software contracts—and can they will face the same economic headwinds that cramped Big Blue's revenue growth.

"IBM's solid third-quarter results—and more hopeful tone—set the table for the fourth quarter—set positive data points for the market, and will likely be viewed with relief by investors," Sanford Bernstein analyst Toni Sacconaghi wrote in a research note. "However, we caution investors from extrapolating broadly to other names for several reasons."

One reason is that IBM generates almost 60 percent of its profit from recurring sources like services and software contracts—spending that tends to hold up better during tough economic times.

Another reason is that IBM trades at a discount to the S&P 500 index even though its earnings growth should be better than the broad market. IBM shares trade at nine times its 2009 earnings.

Compare that with Apple's 15 times and Google's 34 times. Shares



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LIFESTYLE Arts&Books

"Will and Dion," by Daniel Alfajaro

"SAMSON," by Noel Clemente

Bacolod's Masskara features top young artists

"THE VISIONARY," by Arman Balan

"THE ENTERTAINER," by Ike Tolentino, and, above, "Red Flight," by Wilfredo Clemente

RICE TERRACES

Sustainable development, ancient Cordillera-style

Because the terraces are still used for the same purpose for which they were built centuries ago—for planting rice—the site is the first 'continuing cultural landscape' to be inscribed on the Unesco World Heritage List

FLOODED paddies atop those in the Cordillera exhibit a beauty to the sky during planting season.

Augusto F. Villalon

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VISUAL ARTS

Pasilio at Intercon

"Poetry of the Sea," seascapes lived by Estrella E. Pasilio with haiku poetry by Ed Maranan, opens Oct. 15, 6 p.m., on the lobby of Intercontinental, Makati. Call 7207300 local 231 and 233.

Ruiz, Gonzales, Valenzuela at West

Dennis Gonzales, Jose Tence Ruiz, and Woody Valenzuela headline group show "100"—mixed bag for the main gallery. The paintings in the show focus on the socio-economic objections that remain as undertones and taking motifs as their subjects. The show runs Oct. 21–Nov. 24 at West Gallery at 20 Pinatubo, QC. Call 411-0330.

"ROTTLUSION: Dona Sora," by Jose Tence Ruiz

'Forlorn' at Signada

Lawrence Bonoan, Mark Magsalanda, Drew Ramon, Ivan Rivera, and CJ Tanedo are holding the show, "Forlorn," at Signada Gallery at 1187 Jacobo St., Sta. Cruz, Manila. Finale is a event of Intramuros, of Santo Tomas, the artists are now at starting an extraordinary work as the festival.

'Bayo' at Artesia

The allure and mystery of women, the fragility and tenderness of "Eve's daughters," are tackled in "Bayo," a show of Francis Bacion, Jaime Ballados, Joseph Villamor, Dino Hidalgo and Alpha Lanuza, which opens Oct. 15 at Artesia Gallery, 87 SM Megamall. Call 6344560.

Soriano at Jewellery

"Ensemble Diferente" by Ron B. Soriano is on view until Oct. 19 in The Jewellers, 2/F, Greenhills Shopping Center. San Juan. Art works are bordered in oil pastels on cotton paper. Call 6020848 or 6041 6083 ET.

Juan Luna tour of the Ilocos set Oct. 24

EDU HERRERA, THE HISTAGE village in Cavinti, Laguna, is reorganizing a Juan Luna Tour to commemorate the great artist's 151st birth anniversary this month.

Only 24 persons will be accommodated in this exclusive three-day, two-night tour which will showcase the culture and heritage of the Ilocos provinces.

Participants will leave Manila on Oct. 24, on board the late-afternoon PAL flight for Laoag. Upon arrival, they will be transported to Vigan Hamadeca for a romantic dinner by the riverside plaza (weather permitting) or the poolside. Accommodations are of select.

The next morning, after breakfast, Antiquo Alfonso Pilar, an historian and University of the Philippines and University of Santo Tomas professor, will deliver a commemorative lecture at the Crisostomo Ancheta Hall, the meeting and function venue of Ilder.

After an all Ilocano lunch of fresh catch from the sea, you'll be treated with HK, the group will move to nearby Bulay, San Nicolas, Laoag and Aparri to view the world-famous Pinoy Church in Ilocos Sur, Juan Luna's birthplace, Laoag Bellflower, Ivory Church, as well as the weaving and basket-making sites in Paoay and San Nicolas.

After the tour, the group will partake of an authentic Ilokos dinner prepared by chef de cuisine Darwin Antonino, who hails from the Lake Concepcion, but who chose to join his Ilocana wife, Ida, in retirement. The Isla Hermosa Children's Choir will provide tour participants with a medley of traditional songs.

The next day after a leisurely breakfast followed by Sunday Mass, the group will drive to Vigan, with a stop at the Luna Shrine in Badoc, the birthplace of the artist, and Badoc Church, where he was baptized a few days after his birth. Centuries-old churches along the route to Vigan will also be visited.

Lunch will be prepared in one of the heritage houses in Vigan, after which the group will visit the Syquia Mansion, where there are several copies of Luna works, executed by his Spanish assistant Roque Arcenegui who was brought to the Philippines by the Augustinian Order in the early 20th century.

A copy of "Peoples and Kings," a Luna masterpiece, can be found at the mansion. The original was destroyed during the liberation of Manila in 1945.

There are smaller scale versions of "Spoliarium," "The Blood Compact" and an original Manila landscape by Arcenegui.

This will be followed by a short shower through the commercial district.

Departing from Vigan, the group will drive back to Ilocos Sur/Norte to freshen up before their evening flight back to Manila.

Call 0917-5321217 or e-mail ilder_travelinc@yahoo.com

Benito's market scenes at Podium

LAGUNA ARTIST JONAS BENITO's first one-woman show, "Eyes Wide Open," opens Oct. 25 in Galeria Joaquin at The Podium.

The show consists of canvases depicting market scenes with Benito's figures rendered in a palette of bright hues.

The exhibit comes in a fortuitous time, considering that his work "Market Scene" was sold at the Bluepoint auction in August at Singapore's with fixed price (buyer's premium and GST included) of SR 6,750 (P217,044).

In his show, Benito tackles the subject by recreating childhood memories with as much wit as nostalgia.

His musings on rural life acknowledged flower into vivid pieces, resulting in not so much a historical record but a reimagining of generations past, when women in Jaro's town worked together in the fields and marketplace.

Born in Sta. Cruz, Laguna, the self-taught artist grew up watching her father devote his life to painting signs and parade billboards.

In the past few years, Benito found his voice on the canvas consciously responding to the solitary moment in the works of his husband, artist Jerry Morales.

Benito echoes a confidence of an artist who is by nature reflective. Engaging in super playful details, which yield surprisingly humorous anecdotes.

The movement of the eyes enliven the stillness of the figures, lowering sits of the head bolster the secrecy of pursed lips. Figures celebrate the everyday in close by special occasions—still parlacho and bell shawls designed to mark round features and linear shadows. Elsewhere, a lovable color makes an appearance without stifling the Manis Chris.

The show runs until Oct. 29 in Galeria Joaquin at Unit B12-B13, G/L/L, The Podium, Ad/B Avenue, Ortigas Center. Mandaluyong. Call 6347994 or visit www.galeriajoaquin.com.

ABOVE: "At the Market"

"MARKET Boy"

"PR. SILVESTRE Sunrise, Off Boracay," by Fernando Amorsolo

Portraits by the brothers Amorsolo at UST Museum

THE UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS MUSEUM of Arts and Sciences, the oldest museum in the country, will open "Chiaroscuro, Contrast Most: Portraits of the Brothers Amorsolo," tonight at 6:30.

The show is an exhibition of paintings by Fernando and Pablo Amorsolo from the UST Museum's collection, consisting particularly of the portraits of teachers of the Pontifical University done by the brothers.

Guests of honor at the opening will be Marcela Zobel, Purita Cuna, National Museum director Corazon Alvina, Metropolitan Museum of Manila director Eric Zerrudo and UST Senior Magnificus Fr. Fernando V. de la Rosa, OP.

"Chiaroscuro, Contrast Most: Portraits of the Brothers Amorsolo," is part of the exhibits celebrating the Metropolitan Museum of Manila for the "Hit Art, One Heart" Amorsolo Masterpieces. The exhibit runs until Nov. 29.

Museum hours are 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Tuesday–Saturday. Call 731-3431 or 740-9738.

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Scenes from modernity

By Gary C. Devilles
Contributor

IN THE WORKS OF FRANCOISE Reni Phapus C. Dizon-Tortilla, modernity is depicted by the humdrum incidents with close friends and family in the familiar alleys and streets, coffee shops are frequently

patronize, buy with one hangs around, and even in the solitude of our private rooms.

Phapus is fascinated with the fleeting moments, and what is seemingly banal for some become unfound with profundity and luminosity.

To be fascinated is to experience defiance, a craving, or unquestionable thirst that motivates artists painstakingly portray an elusive concern. That is why Phapus is also synonym to capturing the clarity of an ordinary photographic image with unusual colors and stylized figures, such as what she did in "Plants and the Mundit Sky."

Suddenly the sky here becomes green, shattering our common notion of a blue sky, giving the effect that the mother or the child could be anybody who hides or disappears in that looming vendure.

Strange, poetic

The strangeness and poetic quality of images in Phapus' work is undeniable. There is drama in the poetic stories of her subjects, such as the child who clings to her mother who is probably busy haggling with the fruit-stand vendor ("La Boys on the 3rd Street"). The child looks away, unmindful of her clothes and is oblivious to the couple in the street's call. We are also attracted to this scene as the child does, and our gaze becomes peripheral.

We wonder if there's anything more the child sees in here. Although we are tempted to follow the trail of her sight, we also begin to experience how we become engrossed in the painting itself, as though we the viewers merged with the view.

This fantastic rendering is also felt in most of her works that illustrate the ordinary people in their workday world, such as in "Ignore Calabasa" and "Downtown Train."

Phapus, daughter of painter Jeff Dizon, has always been mindful and articulate of her production. In one interview, she says there is an overwhelming pressure to learn and do more.

"One cannot be confident with what one has produced, considering that influences and inspirations are coming from different directions al-

mukiamendy" she says.

"The challenge is really putting this together without repeating or retelling what has been done by artists like Manet or Van Gogh—artists who have been very influential in my practice."

Phapus regards art such as untitled that is as contingent as the work itself, a character indeed common to all modernists.

Phapus Dizon-Tortilla's "Iloni de Flore" opens today, 6 p.m., at Ossio Exposition Gallery, 2/F Dolla Corporation Bldg., 122 Jupiter St., Bel Air, Makati City. Call 8996718.

Sustainable development . . .

From page 57

source for income generation.

Most important, SAVE is raising Ifugao consciousness and pride of culture. Without a new awareness, local culture will erode, and when the culture goes, so do the terraces.

Through SAVE efforts, the Ifugao is once again feeling good about himself. When the Ifugao recovers his pride of place, the terraces will live once again.

Nature and culture

Working on the conservation of the Rice Terraces has made me realize the connectivity that always has existed between nature and culture. One cannot exist without the other.

Heritage sites do not stand alone. They always stand in the context of the people whose lives are closely interconnected with them.

The most outstanding monument of the Filipino nation is one that is not a symbol of civic or religious authority, or one that commemorates a battle or a victory against oppression. It celebrates the genius of our early Filipinos who developed an ancient system of cultural, agricultural, engineering and environmental practices to grow rice, the principal food of our culture.

The ancestors of our Cordillera teachers developed a site of such incredible beauty while making sure their physical need for food was satisfied. For their having achieved all that, our Cordillera

KYDMALIC *carved of mountain streams is the traditional method for moving large rocks to the edges of terraces.*

brothers should stand proud.

E-mail the author at pride_place@gmail.com

LIFESTYLE Arts:Books

Paul Potts, tenor for the cyberage

By Pablo A. Tariella
Contributor

Sam, Ophie and Preach represent three healthy and happy generations that share the same story. For their medical needs they go to VRP Medical Center. From osteoporosis to obstetrics. From dermatology to surgery. To complement medical skills and expertise, the VRP staff is very caring. With more than three decades of expertise, the VRP Medical Center is the perfect combination of caring and caring, which helps you stay healthy all your life.

VRP Medical Center promotes preventive healthcare.

In Celebration of the **Breast Cancer Awareness Month**, VRP Medical Center's Breast Clinic will be extending **20% discount** on **Mammography** from October 1 to 31, 2008. For inquiries and scheduling, please call our Breast Clinic at 53-99-9 loc. 305

Aside from its Breast Clinic, VRP Medical Center also offers other services for early diagnosis, cure or treatment of other diseases. For more information regarding other available programs, please call 531-61-61 loc. 305 or 531-0480.

35 years

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Agos art exhibit pays tribute to musician Francisco Santiago

BY CARLO Cuachay

THE ARTISTS GUILD OF Sta. Maria (Agos), based in Sta. Maria, Bulacan, will honor the town's son and musician Francisco Santiago, in an exhibit that opens at Galerie Andrea (both 119, LRI Bridge Plaza, 2240 St. Garcia St., Bel Air II, Makati City) on Oct. 15, 6 p.m.

The exhibit, Agos' 12th, is a tribute to Santiago, who is recognized as the father of the bandstrand. The guests of honor are Sta. Miguel Cop. president Ramon Arap and Lina Rosendell.

The event artists comprising Agos banded together in 2003 with the primary aim of lending support to one another in the pursuit of their art.

The following year, in partnership with the De La Salle Graduate School of Business, Agos won a World Bank grant for its Visiting-up Painters' competition of ideas.

The grant is now being used as a cooperative loan facility for Agos members.

For inquiries, call Gloria Andrea at (02)403-0233.

BY NASH Libres

BY ALEX Rivas

Paul Potts, tenor...

From page B1

POTTS with Rachelle Ann Go

evenings, a harp, some drama and pianist Chris Taylor), conducted by Robert Wills, then dressed self has lyric-quirky sound and his high notes with palpable accuracy.

It was a popular program consisting of old favorites (theme song from "Love Story"), Hispanic songs (Carols' "Non Llores Mas" and "Granada"), Broadway (selections from "Phantom of the Opera" and "Les Miserables") and a special section devoted to Rogmond Romberg, songs popularized by Mario Lanza.

With accordion between numbers, Perry sang "Granada" with deep lyrical and dedicated it to his wife whom he said he had met through Internet and whom he first saw in a blind date in a train station.

The tenor was remarkably nuanced in the section devoted to the Romberg songs. The medley that included "Serenade" and "Drink, Drink" was gloriously done, but in the singer's attempt to control some closing phrases, he sounded off stuck in the middle.

The opera part was supplied mainly by guest soprano Rachelle Gonzalez, who sang arias from Gounod's "Romeo et Juliet," Puccini's "Chanson Boheme" (from "La Boheme") and Tosca's "Vissi d'arte."

With the opening bill's aria, the audience broke into wild applause, and for the moment Bono had to take a backseat. Closing with Mireya Ng Perez' and "La Calesita," La Gonzalez had a grand exit, and for a while it did look as though Potts had become the guest tenor.

But when they were reunited in the "Turandot" "Nessun," somehow the glow with glimmer of voice, it became apparent both had what it took to reach the closing high notes and made them clear and dazzling to the delight of the audience.

Conductor Nancy Elizon took over Wills in the section where the soprano was soloist.

Encore

After his last number, "Time to say goodbye" ("Con se partira"), the audience clamored for seven encore and, predictably, it was Puccini's "Nessun dorma" from "Turandot." But can one fault the pop tenor who is ready for the part and looked like a gladiator sizing for the big kill (this acts has killer high notes).

Amplified, the tenor didn't have to exert an effort. In just made sure he was following an even legato when entering into the aria. He delivered the final high notes with the rare vocal size of a triumphant gladiator, and the audience gave him a resounding standing ovation.

For the most part, Potts' performance could have delighted his high notes secure as they were fairly well-placed. In some parts, the diction was uneven with the Italian text sounding British and the English text of Lorca songs sounding Italian.

"Pour il secretier & mi" had a grand resolution but it was almost ruled off by a tendency to go sharp with extended final notes.

With Gonolina, the composer was clearly defined. His line had grandeur, his diction was impeccable, and such natural acting to boot, the man she polished position, in to speak.

With Potts, one had a veritable tenor sound, but if one goes by conservatory standards, he clearly had to go through regular coaching of style to polish his nervous notes and improve his diction.

But on the whole, Potts delivered. He did not have the charisma of the regular singer but as you looked into his face and his eyes as he sang, you could almost see into his soul.

To be sure, he is no extraordinary tenor and cannot as yet claim the throne of Pavarotti, Domingo or even Carreras. But for that cyberage audience that filled up the PICC Plenary Hall, Potts had become their popular link to opera.

With no pretensions to being a great singer, Perry came out real and human without the pompous air of some opera personalities. Latter after the concert, we learned that Potts we liked Gonolina she seemed be part of his Taiwan tour.)

Parenting

Make snack times healthy times

By Alec C. Cupid

There is always a time for snacks for an actively growing child. Both school work and play time can take a lot out of a child, and those will make him go hungry in separate intervals throughout the day. Make sure, though, that the kids eat snacks that are high in nutritional value to avoid unfavorable health conditions and eating problems in the future.

While some parents may think that snacks can only ruin their children's appetites for the main meals, healthy snacking can be turned into opportunities for children to achieve nutrition requirements. The parents' concern is valid simply because the usual and easily accessible snacks are those that have high sodium and sugar contents. Some even contain bad fats that may prove adverse cardiovascular effects on the child when he grows to be an adult. Instead of candies, these so-called snacks may actually be putting "junk" inside the body, causing obesity in some and tooth cavities in the least.

Here're some tips several ways to make snacks healthy and beneficial to children's growth and development while taking away the fun side of snacking.

Healthy snacks

Snacks that are high in vitamins, minerals and other nutrients can actually cure good and feel right. The following are the types of healthy snacks that can be served for a rapidly growing child's nutritional requirements:

- Fresh fruits
- Fruit cups and canned fruit, as it is in fruit salad
- Frozen fruits: frozen grapes, frozen blueberries, strawberries, peaches, mangoes, and melon
- raw vegetables that can be served with mayo dip or salad dressing: carrot sticks, baby carrots, celery sticks, cucumber, turnip
- gelatin with fruits
- macaroni salad
- healthy grains (bread, crackers, cereals, etc.)
- muffins, banana cake
- oatmeal

Parents may also find some healthy Filipino delicacies like puto, bibingka, maruya, and sumans as tasty and filling. Pan de sal is tastier with cheese and meats. Sandwich is always a hit among kids, although moms can also make them more appealing to kids by spreading mayonnaise for palatability and adding nutritious value. Tuna, chicken, and egg fillings can even be homemade for as long as you pick the right kind of mayonnaise to prepare them with. Look for the Omega 3 nutrients to the mayonnaise label.

Happy healthy snacking!

A healthy snack is one made with ingredients that are sourced from natural foods. There are foods that are processed minimally to preserve their rich nutritious created inside them by nature. Healthy snacking occurs when any of the five food groups: cereals and grains, vegetables and fruits, meat and fish, dairy and fats and oils are combined in one snack.

A good example of a healthy snack combination of nutrients is a grilled beef sandwich garnished with mayonnaise. From this combination, the child gets his protein, carbohydrates, and vitamin E necessary to one simple snack. This, then, becomes a good supplement to certain food groups or nutrients that the child might have missed from his regular meal.

To make sure that snacks are made easy and healthy at the same time, consider the following tips:

- Be creative by making healthy foods fun. Cut them into shapes of animals, flowers or any other shapes of the child's favorite things.
- Involve your child in planning a snack that includes his favorite foods.
- Take the lead in eating healthy snacks to eventually make your child to follow suit.
- Do not offer sweets at least two hours before each mealtime to avoid getting a sense of fullness.

Kick these unhealthy snacks habits

While having snacks with little or no nutrients is obviously a bad way to eat, having too much during snack time can also be bad. The following are common unhealthy snack habits that can be avoided:

- Allowing kids to eat high-fat snacks and high-calorie snacks, except as an occasional treat, such as cookies, chips, candy doughnuts, fruit drinks, soda, etc.
- Following irregular snack time for your kids. The normal times for snacks are:late the day are late mornings and early afternoons for toddlers and preschoolers and just after school for older kids.
- Allowing snacks near lunch or dinner.

There is a reason why some kids' favorite food of the day is a snack, and parents should not stop them from eating snacks whenever they want. What parents can do is to make sure that snack times are kept healthy and fun at the same time.

Breastfeeding means brainpower and emotional security

THE FIRST THREE YEARS OF LIFE MEANS FOREVER. Whatever experiences the baby was exposed to during his infancy whether good or bad, is imprinted throughout his adulthood. It affects learning and personality as well as joys, fears and perceptions in life. These experiences generally contribute to the person's human relationships.

Breastfeeding plays a critical role in the child's development. The mother is the child's habitat for 9 months and hearing begins in the womb. After birth, the bursting presence is enhanced with the child's first sensation as the baby cuddles hearing. Right after birth, the senses of smell, taste and touch are as in gods. The usual server is highly stimulated with the smell of breast milk. The skin-to-skin touch senses the child's easy in the new world, providing him with the naturally developed warmth from the mother's breast. The baby's skin is sensitive and soft and gazes are fixed and focused. The mother's body temperature changes according to the needs of the baby moment by moment. The human body manufactures perfect food, water and medicine found only in human milk. In cases of premature babies, human milk adjust dramatically in terms of composition (such as higher protein content) to suit the need of the preemie. When the environment is cold, women will produce more high-quality milk needed by the baby in certain conditions and climate. The breastfeeding factor is something that breastfeeding has which artificial milk can never have.

The mother is the first teacher to the breastfeeding experience. The breast is made by God as much and light because it is for the baby's first sight. Right after birth at the first hour, the baby is allowed to crawl to the breast for its first taste of medicine as in first immunization. Crawling naturally he reaches the breast from the abdomen within the first hour of life. The dark areola is the guiding feature as it is complete from 2 to 3 months as documented by Israelis, India and Philippines.

The pervading misconception even among moms and medical personnel is that there is no milk or very little supply at the onset of birth. This is a fallacy. The baby's stomach is the very size of a thumb and all the baby needs are the tiny drops from the "goldenrod" - the colostrum from the breast. It is yellowish because it is highly concentrated with nutrients and antibodies to fight infections. Only the baby sees and gets it so long as he is placed on top of the mother's breast all the time and encouraged to suck. Most of the time the baby is sleepy, awakening and sleeping again on the breast. This is why the Breastfeeding Counseling in fact was instituted as a protective law for newborns. It ensures that human beings are nursed in the beginning of life and the child's right to food and medicine for the well-being of birth.

Breastfeeding as a bond start to enhancing is love, closeness with the mother in the first education. When the baby breastfeeds, he learns warmly to the sound of the heartbeat that has been familiar while in the womb. The heartbeat changes from fast to slow depending on the mother's state of emotions, and the child is learning these concepts. His sensory state that comes in different textures from high-low varied intensities are stimulators to the sense of hearing for the baby's learning stimulation. The breastfeeding baby learns to be busy in routines with the mom when she answers the phone and engage in a conversation. It is a rich learning experience for the baby's integrating concepts because the mother's voice comes in various tones and intensities: different sounds: laughing, the music, soft, loud textures.

Breast milk also comes in different tastes, naturally in a given time and state. It perfectly suits the needs of the child in given circumstances and age. Breast milk contains hundreds of immune factors that help protect the baby against infection. These include antibodies, white blood cells, lactoferrin and other factors of essential nutrients, fatty acids that smash create viruses.

Long chain fatty acids are critical nutritional building blocks in breast milk, needed by infants and young children as components of cell membranes, and are of particular importance for visual and neurological brain development. Brain growth is most rapid during the last trimester of pregnancy and the first year of life, and the full complement of brain cell nutrients, including breast milk sourced long-chain fatty acids DHA and ARA together with all the critical cofactors, coenzymes, and complementary nutrients are needed for full development of these cells. Only breast milk provides these components "building blocks. Thus, the galactosylated chains of milk oligosaccharides regarding their processed DHA and ARA which come from

BREAST FEEDING 02

RAM: Bio-Bio will soon lead me to the one who ate my kiddie biscuits."

"WHEN I'm all grown up, can I use a trigger baby bonds?"

"STOP this smile, Missie!"

"UH-OH, I forgot my lilings."

What kids are really saying

Breastfeeding means brainpower and emotional security

From page D1

signs and large cannot deliver the promise of brain power it can never match the capabilities of breast milk, which is God-made.

From birth, one of the greatest needs of all children is to be talked to, touched, cuddled, hugged, to see familiar faces and expressions, to hear familiar voices, and to see others respond to them. Children also need new and interesting things to look at, listen to, touch, hold and play with. This is the beginning of learning.

Special fatty acids in breast milk lead to increased intelligence quotients (IQs) and better visual acuity. A breastfed baby is likely to have an IQ of around eight points higher than a non-breastfed baby.

"The Danish study determined that independent of a wide variety of confounding factors, the positive impact of breastfeeding was significant into adulthood and that nutrients in breast milk may have long-term positive effects on cognitive and intellectual development. They found a 'dose' related response, as the duration of breastfeeding was associated with higher scores in verbal and performance tests."

Breastfed babies have fewer ear infections, which have been associated with hearing loss and learning delays. Several studies have shown better school achievement amongst breastfed children compared to artificial milk-fed ones.

Breastfeeding is not only important for health, nutrition and development of the baby's brain and sense of security, but also enhances brain development and learning readiness. (Source: Ann Bowerdin, Baby Magazine)

gut bacteria?

Why C-section babies need good bacteria in their tummies

When preparing for their newborn, most moms would make sure the nursery is in order. Everything baby needs from nappies to night light should all be ready. But for babies delivered via caesarean or C-section, preparing them for the world requires more than just the usual baby stuff.

Healthy Tummies

Recent studies show that the mode of delivery may affect baby's immune system*. For instance, babies delivered via the vaginal route get in contact with the mother's good bacteria as the baby descends the vaginal canal. The friendly bacteria grow and multiply in the baby's gut, which is the largest organ of his immune system. The more good bacteria an infant has in his gut, the earlier his immune system can be stimulated and trained to be strong. On the other hand, C-section babies bypass the birth canal. Their sterile birth conditions deprive them of exposure to friendly bacteria (Bifidobacteria) that would awaken a strong immune response early in life. Any delay in introducing this good bacteria to C-section babies make them prone to infections and allergies – even when there is no parental history of allergy.

Bacteria protection

Good thing, C-section babies can develop strong immune systems with the help of nature's nurturing goodness – breast milk! Breast milk provides all the nutrients

Any delay in introducing good bacteria to C-section babies make them prone to infections and allergies

essential for optimal mental and physical development. It also supports the growth of good bacteria in the baby's gut like Bifidobacteria and Lactobacilli. Recent studies show breast milk actually contains probiotics*†.

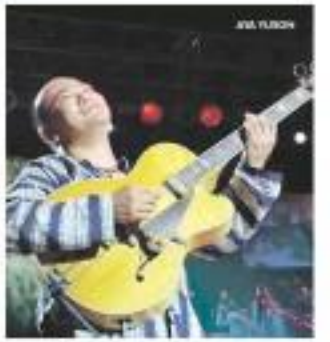
C-section babies must be breastfed especially during the first 6 months of life, a crucial period in the development of a strong immune response. Through breastfeeding, they can acquire the Bifidobacteria they need to help awaken and train their immune systems to be strong. A strong immune system will help reduce the C-section infant's susceptibility not only to respiratory and allergic conditions but also to infections as well.

Welcome drink

So if you're going through a C-section, welcome your baby in the world with the protective goodness of breast milk. It activates and strengthens the immune system, as it supports a healthy digestive system and promotes brain and visual development. With these in place, your baby is truly ready for a big new world.

*Pediatrics Volume 117(2), August 2006, pp e1-e11 (doi:10.1542/peds.2005-1348) †Nutrition Volume 22(5), May 2006, pp 495-504 (doi:10.1016/j.nut.2005.08.006)

Aya Yuson's new swing



The jazz artist's fourth album is produced by London-based Candid Records

By Alexis Mayuga
Contributor

ON THE HEELS OF RELEASING "MORE Song," his first album with the London-based Candid Records, jazz artist (and early prize-winning writer) Aya Yuson gives his fellow-writer (and recent Stylum Mayuga) an inner view of the past two decades as a musician's rhythm and rhyme.

Twenty years ago, Aya came home to France. He just had his first live musical instrument in the University of the Philippines College of Music. Now he wanted to drop a course in business management at the Ateneo de Manila and clothes to do blues full time.

There was no stopping him and a wild ride began. After an intensive summer course on the acoustic guitar with Lester Demerille, Aya, 18, won first prize for a haunting rapsicode treble in a university-wide classical guitar competition. Conventional discovery followed: what he really truly wanted was to become a jazz artist like Wes Montgomery.

Formal courses at UP were never enough for him. Dropping out to third year ("I have more to learn outside."), he nevertheless entered into a deepening group of things musical to: attend/earn reviews of other musicians in performance, under the pseudonym "Wes, Jr." for the months Chronicle [copy illegible] a deeply entrenched pop icon who will remain unnamed here).

Meanwhile he was also doing musical arrangements for contemporaries like Cooky Chan in early Color it Red, and forever disappearing into the dens of master musicians like Arturo Arvizu, Ehrlich Suson and Tawang Kamalig.

Aya's guitar went electric in his late teens. Soon he was playing jazz standards with Ronald Tomas on one in a chilly blue-lit bar called Left Alone in Makati. Next he was publicly jamming with his jazz superiors—pianist Hiroshi Inoma Collin de la Cabada and drummer Blas Llanos in twenty (20) performances.

Then the saxophonist "Golden Boy of Philippine Jazz" was pissed on him by the late great jazz guitarist Mercho Aquinol, whom he called "Papa Cho." It's been quite a ride.

Aya at 35 continues to earn him dozens of coverings with Big Boys in the global jazz universe—like Eric Marienthal of the heart-exhuming tenor sax and (that poor silk of a jazz singer, Jhun Tavid). (Don't you dare die before you hear his take on "Bits Of Dung Singing.")

Between musical peaks, Aya has done livelihood stints with old UP classmates and foreign gigs with pop bands like Eraserheads and Urbano, but he's always bound back to jazz with stellar chartings.

Besides performing with fellow musicians of choice at present, he writes pithy liner notes for their albums on request...does session work and more arrangements, and occasionally plays his jazz guitar in Manila's watering holes (the latest is the Mandarin Orchestra).

He also tutors private students and teaches at the Jazz Day academy of the Arts overlooking Laguna de Bay, off Route [illegible].

Here's our interview:

What makes "Angel Song" different from your three previous albums?

All songs in this album are original—unlike the last album, "Aya Yuson Is Is"—which had all standards and tunes by other composers. And unlike the Wikoff albums, half of this album is vocal tunes, with singers singing lyrics.

Where that aforesaid Tenor Emperor reviewed "Solo," he heard catharsis in it. But it had a purpose. "Part Parody, Part Catharsis" was Bai Cillo, right?

Yeah. "Part parody" because it made fun of things I like making fun of...like the Bee Bosh Dancers, the Selects ice cream jingle, etc. "Part catharsis" because it was home of heartbreak—a song that would cure he desired or let me rest until it was set free to rest.

Romantic fool. What about Wikoff's—what's it about for, again? And please remind me...who else was in it and how did you guys come up with that name?

With Doctors of Underground Jazz by-percussionist—that's an Einstein's reviews. That name was Bobo Stenson's idea. The percussionist Bobo on drums, The Goran Tao on bass, Ronald Tomas on saxophone and me on guitar.

About those two Wikoff albums...from the distance of six years, how would you describe their respective characters?

"Ground Zero," the first album, was realism. Yet it's the art of Dreamsailing, the second album, was wild.

"Ground Zero" becomes you did it once after 9-11?

A few days after 9-11, Boku came up with the name "Ground Zero," which was a heartfelt response to the emotions of 9/11. We all agreed that name best reflected the theme of the album as a whole. That's why it became the title too.

Yeah, 9-11 with Wikoff was unforgettable. **You guys were playing "Strike" by Starlight like a second track to the 9/11s** towers exploding on other TV countries in Mom's Oriental Bed evening. **Now what about Zero and the Art of Dreamsailing?**

So with more things in Wikoff's world, that title began as a joke. We were hardly earning anything from our music as one piano and saxophonist Ronald and he wanted to go back to school to study dreamsailing.

I'm still not sure I have seen/heard what shows that, but I sense the tone "Lies & the Art of Dreamsailing" to commemorate that video-line/shot which became the title track.

So what did you do for each album and what would you say you learned from each?

For both Wikoff albums, I composed, arranged and played the tunes. For "Solo," I arranged and played. With each album, I learn as much about what not to do as I do about what to do. ...Awkwardwardness.

Herbal Wraith! you insured an opinion on Wikoff's place in Philippine jazz history?

Modesty aside, Wikoff really stands up the some for the two years we were around as a group. Our elders were happy that we'd advance of the jazz flame were making their presence felt. Our peers were flabbergasted that we had the guts to stick to our guns. Many younger musicians were inspired to look into forms of music other than mainstream/pop music.

If "parody" and "catharsis" became taglines for "Solo," what would it be for "Angel Song"?

Share the gift; share the love.

Tell me more.

Almost everyone knows something about the other. Most people know a bit about the other. Many know a lot about the how. A few know a bit more than others.

One thing almost no one talks about is the why.

As far as I'm concerned, there's only one why worth pursuing: Share the gift, share the love.

Fitness. How will we hear you made your choices of singers and instrumentalists for it.

They were all the best musicians for the job at hand—Tess on tenor sax, Jimmy Tan on bass, both upright and electric; Alec Fidel on drums; Gladee, Arthur Hamoong, Allwyn Balon and Rufus Hernani on vocals.

Listening to the album now, I realize that the mixing was well nigh perfect. I'm occasionally happy with everyone's work on the album. The only thing wrong with it was the guitar player.

Fatster Boy An, for? he bonded working all the music, lyrics and arrangements for "Angel Song," you did everything else—idea casting, even production. Kidang na lang video with you guys clowning onstage. Do many musicians do this besides Madonna?

Examples abound—Quincy Jones, Joey Ayala, guitarist Robben Ford, Joni Mitchell, to name a few.

What you've got here is a wide musical, artistic, even age range. Is there an organizing principle for all these fourteen cuts?

The track order follows a story arc. It traces the path of a heart, which was broken then learned to see again. At the end, the first song, Sinbian Princess, is revisited/replayed. Thus the story arc comes full circle.

Oho, another romantic confession. But it also looks like the sketch of a playbook and score for a future "Angel Song." For musical, don't you think?

I haven't thought about that yet.

Meanwhile what's the game plan for "Angel Song," "the CD"

Sell millions of copies, get rich and famous and rule the world.

Hahaha! I still remember how you loved Art Tatum's "Tea Ring with the Alien" back in high school. Are started you out on the road to jazz, didn't he? How far do you think you've come since then?

Sorry, I'm not a jazz musician. He's a work guitarist. And I'm still the same person. I still don't know it's. The only difference is that now I know that I don't know it's.

I only said Satriani got you started, mine guy anyway, how did a boy-next-door like you wind up with Black Man's music?

It seemed like a good idea at the time.

Hahaha! So what would be your other musical memories and perhaps?

Wes Montgomery, George Benson, Bill Frisell, Keith Jarrett, Arturo Arvizu, Ehrlich Suson, Tawang Kamalig and Ricky Cortezo.

Philippine jazz has a long history and many distinguished practitioners, but it's never become mainstream here. Considering the Pinoy's cultural musicality, what's your biggest "if only" for this part of the music scene?

If only music would be about sounding good rather than looking good.

But you have both gift and grit for making your dreams come true, Aya. You've already had a taste of jamming with black jazzers in Manila and San Francisco. What happened there?

I just did my thing and they did theirs. And we all liked what we came up with.

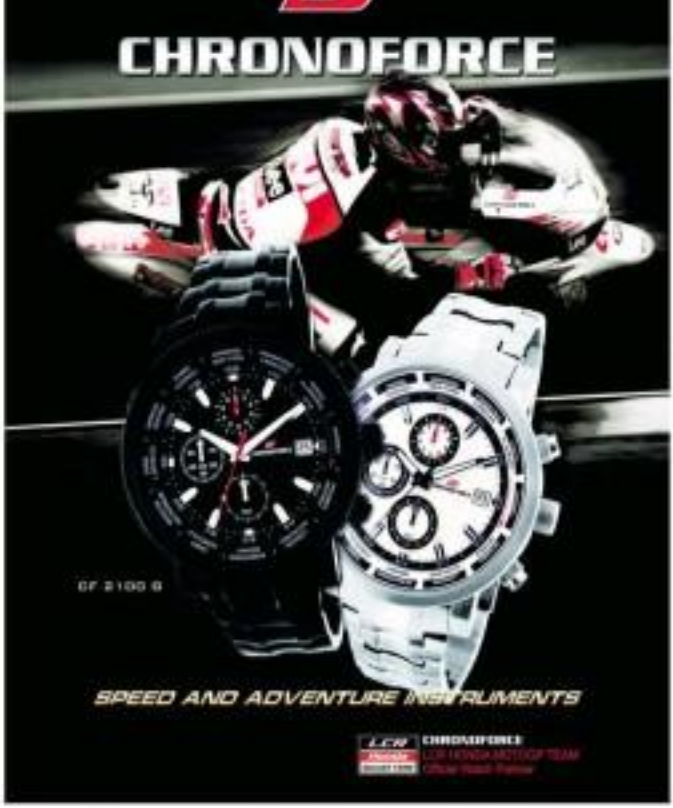
So what jazz capitals do you see dreams of visiting and playing in, perhaps living in next?

New York, London, Paris.

How do you see yourself 10, 20 years from now?

Older, better and with even less hair.

Hail Aya Yuson's blog CDBirds Link for Aya ng Bahay at http://pcijfan.friendster.com/18005293. E-mail ayayuson@yahoo.com



ALEXIS

SM MALL OF ASIA | SM MEGAMALL | SM NORTH EDSA
WALTERMART MAKATI | ROBINSON'S PLACE PADRE FAURA
GLORIETTA 1 | 4 | ROBINSON'S PLACE METROWN MALL

LIFESTYLE Arts&Books

BOOT Aquino Cruz and grandmother Cory Aquino celebrate "Ninoy Art and Essays." They are holding up an art work from the book.

Ninoy in a nutshell

This charming collection of art and prose is the perfect vehicle to get an entirely new generation of Filipinos acquainted with Ninoy Aquino's life and legend

By Raul S. De Vera

REVIEW

TWENTY-FIVE. IT IS A NUMBER OF MUCH significance, a figure that pervades much of "Ninoy: Art and Essays," collected by Aggy Aquino-Cruz (self-published, Mandaluyong, 2008, 160 pages) in both fighting form and spectacular spirit.

Aquino-Cruz, eldest grandchild to the late Sen. Benigno S. Aquino Jr., calls himself "a comic book geek" and casually harnesses the power of that form to create a tribute which is also the most accessible encapsulation of the late senator yet seen; "Ninoy in a 160 pages or less.

"It has been 25 years since Aug. 21, 1983," Aquino-Cruz writes. "When asked the question: Who is Ninoy Aquino?, one of the youth of today will give an answer worth hearing, or has he been reduced to being just some guy on the P500 bill?"

Aquino-Cruz breaks down the considerable life of Ninoy into 25 bite-size highlights, and then illustrates the heck out of them.

He does this by gathering art from a broad range of sources, including some of the Philippines' most successful comic-book artists, accompanying essays from those who knew Ninoy best, all wrapped in a hardcover package with a gorgeous cover by Leinil Francis Yu of Marvel's blockbuster "Secret Invasion."

Following that lead, "Ninoy" assembles black-and-white and color art from Whilce Portacio, Gerry Alanguilan, Carlo Pagulayan, Ekarny Tolibas, Wenilen Segovia, Philip Tan, Lan Medina, Andrew Dybuncio.

Providing the insight through essays are former President Corazon C. Aquino, Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, Kris Aquino-Yap, Pauleen Sicsic, Louis Nazareth and others.

The art and the prose are uneven but diverse, earnest in their goal of distilling the essence of Ninoy Aquino in as few words and images as possible.

"Ninoy" also dispenses some of the late senator's choice quotes, including "I have carefully weighed the virtues and the faults of the Filipino, and I have come to the conclusion that he is worth dying for!"

Reader-friendly

It starts brilliantly. From a glimpse of Ninoy as a heartbroken child after losing his father, to the young man wearing Cory, "Ninoy" presents a very reader-friendly passage through Aquino's life before the legend. It is intrinsic (Cory Aquino got an Artemisia painting of herself from Ninoy) and surprisingly inclusive (read the doctor's report on Aquino's triple bypass).

Aquino's achievements as a governor and a senator in 16 stun readers to those times of pedestrian expressions. It is heating to read Ninoy, the son who also became a senator, write about what it means to be senator in this country at this time.

Aquino's Ati-Ati ordeal in Leyte is nothing short of dramatic. "In Ilolo, it dawned upon him what it meant to be destined for greater things," the book notes. "Ninoy the future president died in Leyte in his place, Ninoy the hero was born."

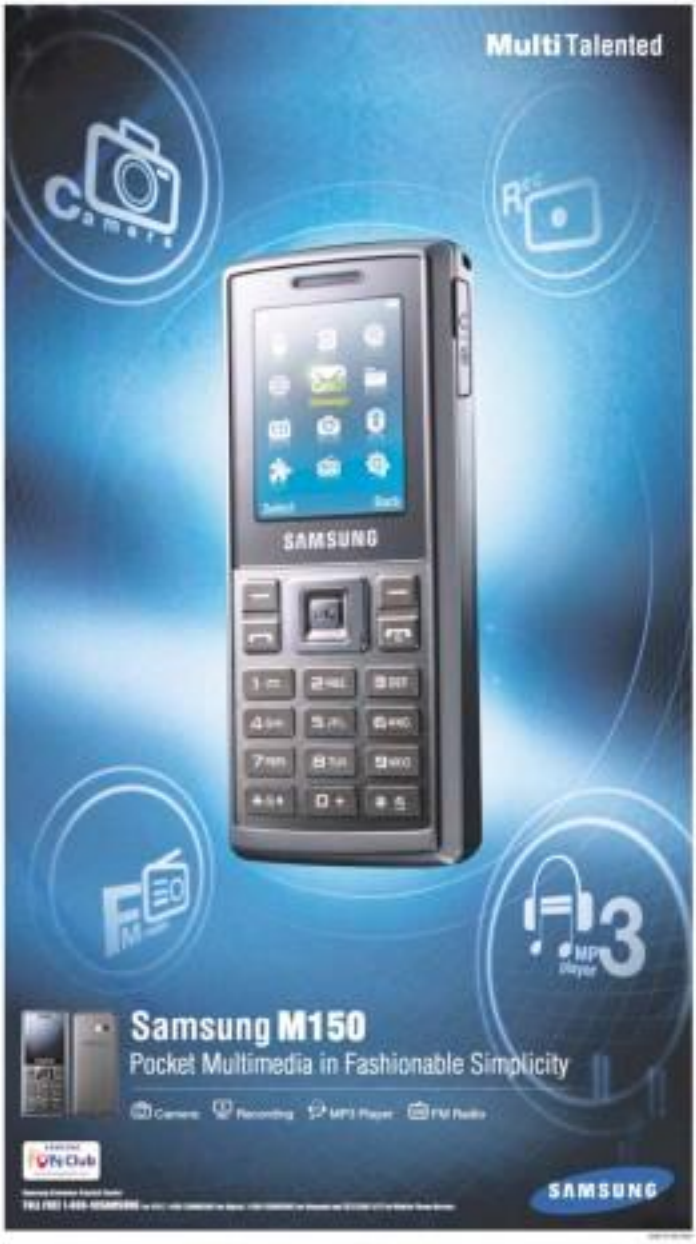
From a quarter century later, it is difficult not to feel moved by trite devotion, after three heroic years called in Boston, to return home to certain death. The one page in "Ninoy" that is truly done up in full comic-book form is page 81, a riveting four-panel recollection by Aquino-Cruz and artist Jason Paz of Ninoy Aquino's last moments prior to his assassination. The book has it right: "There was no stopping Ninoy."

Beyond its quirky visual and narrative charm, "Ninoy" boasts a winning price (P300 for a hardcover) and a good cause (all the book's proceeds go to the Benigno S. Aquino Jr. Foundation). Together with the ingenious consumer campaign, "Ninoy" represents a dynamic and valuable attempt to acquaint an entire generation of Filipinos with the life and legend of Ninoy Aquino, most significantly a generation born after Aquino's history-changing death in 1983, and one which includes the book's creator, Aggy Aquino-Cruz.

"I wasn't sure what a 23-year-old like me could do to achieve such a great feat," he explains. "But I was certain I wanted my life to inspire the youth as he had inspired me."

Judging by the succinct yet accessible nature of "Ninoy: Art and Essays," it can be safely said, Job well done, because this is definitely a book worth shelling out for.

Available in hardcover at Comic Odyssey and Dreed's shop.



GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

A LINH — BY JESS ARRIOLA

PUGAD BABOY — BY PAL JUNIOR

DICK TRACY

LOVEANGES — BY ELIZABETH CHICHOLO

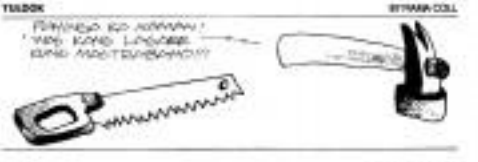
JAMES BOND

DIVINE COMEDY — BY STEVEN PANGILINAN

SMART ELUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

ATOMIC AND WEEDY — BY LYRA GARCELLANO

TULDOK — BY MARK COLL



KIKO MACHINE — BY ROLANDO ARRIOLA

BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

CONCEPTS SU DOKU

Concepts SudoKu — By Dave Green

4	7			8	2			
					4	9		7
	5		7				3	
	8							
	2		3		7		4	
							5	
	1				5		6	
8		6	4					
			2	6			9	4

Difficulty Level ★★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	1	7	4	6	3	5	8	2
2	3	5	8	9	1	7	6	4
6	8	4	5	2	7	9	3	1
8	7	1	9	6	2	5	3	4
5	6	3	1	7	4	8	2	9
4	9	2	6	3	5	1	7	8
3	2	8	7	5	1	4	9	6
7	5	9	2	4	6	1	8	3
1	4	6	3	9	8	2	7	5

Comedy about gay chef is Audience Choice for 2008 Pelicula

"Full Plate de Carne (Chef's Special)"

NACHO G. Willis's "Fuera de Carta (Chef's Special)" is the Audience Choice in this year's Pelicula, the biggest Spanish-language film festival in Asia.

The movie, which also opened the festival, made waves with the viewing public for its hilarious but touching take on Mati, a chef who has to keep his restaurant out of debt while keeping up the appearance that he's straight to his children from a failed marriage and fighting the attraction he feels toward a very hot ex-footballer from Argentina.

Willis, who was in Manila for the opening of the festival, said he was proud and happy about the reception the film got from Filipino audiences.

"I am still amazed by the reception of the movie both in Manila and Cagayan de Oro. In spite of the fact that the film is very local, very Spanish, the Manila and Cagayan audiences found situations and a sense of humor they can relate to", Willis said.

"Fuera de Carta" was screened three times during the 12-day film festival. The people of Cagayan de Oro had the chance to see the film during the special edition of Pelicula held there. It was also screened last night to close Pelicula.

The seventh edition of Pelicula, the biggest Spanish-language film festival in Asia, was organized by the Instituto Cervantes as part of its celebration of Spanish Month, in cooperation with the Spanish Embassy in the Philippines, AECID, Ministerio de Cultura, the Spanish Program for Cultural Cooperation, Qatar Airways, Telefónica Cinema, Cine Europa, Light Rain/Transit Authority, Serendipity, Ayala Malls Cinemas, Alba, Casa Arenas, Granfil and Espasa-Fil.

Something so ordinary as spying

By Shirley Lua
Contributor

"Matahaarie" (2007)
Directed by Icíar Bollaín

THERE'S NOT YOUR USUAL detective story. It is, however, your usual story.

"Matahaarie" revolves around the activities of three women investigators of a detective agency in Madrid.

Carmen keeps surveillance on photographer Sergio's business partner, while eventually is having an affair with Sergio's wife.

Iris, back to work after the birth of her second child, attempts to trace the whereabouts of a swimmer's old flame.

Ana is assigned to a multinational company working as an undercover agent to uncover suspected thefts allegedly taking place in the offices.

The name "Matahari" recalls the legendary femme fatale who played the double agent during World War I. In this film, the three women do not seem to be "Matahaaris," for they are anything fatale in the conventional sense, nor are they spies in a typical thriller.

"Spies" usually conjures scenes of espionage and secret conspiracy that threatens world order and security.

Interestingly, all the elements and tensions of a spy thriller are nonetheless contained in this film: concealment, reconnaissance, disguise, trailing, surveillance, tension, discovery and betrayal.

Indeed, the title is apt in invoking "Matahari," for these women investigators are leading "double" lives switching from the professional to the private, or rather, leaving the professional encroach upon the private.

They are obliged to play spies and engage in clandestine operations in their personal domain.

The film gradually unravels complications in their individual lives. Carmen, who surreptitiously videotapes the affair between Sergio's partner and his wife, tries to convince Sergio to see the truth—that his marriage is on the rocks. She becomes aware that she, too, must see the truth—that her own marriage has disintegrated into a cold bed.

"MATAHARIE"

Iris spies on her own husband, suspecting that he has a second family. Instead of thrills, Ana discovers internal conflicts brewing within the company management's outsourcing activity versus employees' unrest. She finds herself falling in love with Manuel, a union representative in the strike-wound who encourages employees' resistance. He thus faces a terrible dilemma: to choose love or duty.

Hence, in this film, doubling and spying do not occur in a political arena, the international magnitude is so commonplace and commonized to a domestic and personal sphere.

This film reminds us that, ironically, clandestinity and deception are considerable parts of our ordinary life.

It is disturbing to realize that, in our everyday ways, we are all spies in our own shocking thrillers. Much of our everyday operations are spent in works of cover-up and spying, particularly as social exercises in relationships.

Clandestinity and deception in a domestic realm class with the societal questions of loyalty. There arises a preoccupation that the other party is embedded in deceit and betrayal, and therefore, guilty as hell. Any due process is irrelevant since private detection is able to unearth sufficient proofs.

In this film, Iris's husband Erik's concealment of a previous affair is judged by Eva as an act of betrayal in spite of the affair having taken place years before their marriage. And Eva's "investigation" on her husband is likewise directed as an act of suspicion and distrust.

The film suggests that, as in any detective or spy story, the purpose of detection is the pursuit of truth, and the end goal is the preservation of security and order in the world.

Thus, at the end of this film, when discovery and revelation lead to closure, we become smugly, only normal people making choices they deem are right and true. If there is any moral triumph, it lies in the personal, inward level. And somehow, we'd like to believe that order has been restored.

"Matahaarie" assembled a fine cast which includes Maria Vázquez (Iris); Ernie González (Carmen); Najwa Nimri (Eva); Diego Martín (Manuel); and Ivana Elena Rinkli.

Multi-talented actress-writer-director Icíar Bollaín directed this film. Bollaín received the Goya Award for Best Direction for her film "Te Doy Mis Ojos" (2003) and the Best New Director Award in the Valladolid International Film Festival for her debut film "Hola, ¿Estás Sola?" (1995).

Shirley G. Lua teaches literature at De La Salle University in Manila. She specializes in Philippine literature, diaspora studies, and film and literature. She is a member of the Philippine Center of International PEN, and one of the founding members of Alon Literary Collective, a Manila-based poets' group.

"POETICA"

Chema Madoz photo exhibit at Instituto Cervantes

OBJECTS AND SUBJECTS IN EXTRAORDINARY images are the highlight of Chema Madoz's photographic exhibit, "Poetica," at the Galeria de Exposiciones of the Instituto Cervantes Manila, ending Oct. 17.

The exhibit is part of Fiesta, the celebration of the Spanish Month.

Best known for his black-and-white surrealist photographs, Chema Madoz (Madrid, 1958) won Japan's Hasselblad Awards Overseas Photographer Prize in 2000.

Catherine Coleman, the curator of photography at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, will be present during the opening of the exhibit on Oct. 17, 7 p.m. She will give a lecture on Chema Madoz's art.

Instituto Cervantes is at 815 TM Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila. Call 526 1482 loc. 113 or visit manila.cervantes.es.

Wilcon Sucat is Now Open

St. Theresa's launches cookbook

A COLLECTION OF 101 DELICIOUS recipes, all contributed by alumnae of St. Theresa's College, Quezon City, Manila, Baguio and Cebu, will be the main feature of "From Kusina to Cuisine: The Theresian Cookbook."

The St. Theresa's College Manila Foundation will launch the cookbook on Oct. 15, 6 p.m., at the CEO Lounge, One World Square Building, 10 Upper McKinley Road, McKinley Hill, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig in partnership with Anvil Publishing.

The limited first edition will be available at fully bonded, 8 Different Bookstore and Bookmark. Call 8908063-65.

New thriller

IN THE ASSORBING NEW THRILLER FROM the author of the international bestseller, "The Last Templar," a geneticist and a CIA agent embark on a deadly quest to find the most dangerous book in the world and uncover a secret that has fascinated everyone in its path for centuries.

"The Sanctuary" by Raymond Khoury (Penguin in Naples in 1700, when the Marquis de Montbreun harbors a secret sought by Raimondo de Sangro, in Baghdad, 2003, an army unit stages a spectacular raid on a fortified villa and makes a horrifying discovery—a concealed state-of-the-art lab where dozens have been subjected to gruesome experiments.

The lab's mysterious scientist believed to be working on a bioweapon and known only as the baboon. The doctor escapes, but a puzzling clue is left behind: an Ouroboros—the tail devourer...a circular symbol of a snake that's feeding on its own tail.

The power of the symbol comes to light, revealing the centuries of mystery and pain left in its wake, and a conspiracy that could change the world forever.

The book is available at Powerbooks.

Neozep, DepEd bring Sipon Aralin to public elementary school students

This month, Neozep, in partnership with the Department of Education, launches the Pantawid Hesosep Sipon Aralin program in elementary schools all over ORA. The Sipon Aralin series aims to educate students about the proper management and treatment of common cold or sipon.

With this intention, Pantawid Hesosep will sponsor lectures conducted by the schools' Physical Education and Health faculty and distribute free 15ml samples of Pantawid Hesosep to their students. Aided by Sipon Aralin teaching modules, the teachers will help communicate the basics of the common cold, its causes and symptoms, as well as the handling of proper cold management and treatment for the whole family.

During the Sipon Aralin series, appointed faculty will distribute the Sipon Aralin Sipon-Sala Guide, a student's workbook designed to involve both students and parents in learning about colds. This is to encourage the shared, homo reinforced knowledge on how to suitably treat colds within the family environment.

Pantawid Hesosep and DepEd's Mano Manila initiative serves as a pilot run. Its success in its nationwide implementation of the program further on into the school year.

The school invasion forms part of Pantawid Hesosep's campaign. It aims to combat every cold symptom so the children can enjoy and get more out of life. To further spread awareness on this advocacy, there will be TV, radio and out-of-home ads which will educate the consumers on how multi-cold symptoms affect their child. We bring the symptoms to life through the character of Sipongs - the embodiment of all cold symptoms - to make it interesting and easier on understand. Many importantly, this ad will demonstrate how the child can be quickly relieved of these cold symptoms through Pantawid Hesosep's Symptoms Formula.

Manila hosts Asian Conference on Religions for Peace

Hosted by CBCP and UST, the meeting is expected to draw the world's top religious leaders to discuss how the different religious traditions can foster peace amid Asian conflicts

By Dexter R. Hardin
Contributor

RELIGION IS AN INverse as the individuals and cultures of every nation in this world. Though there may be differences in each nation's traditions and beliefs, the universal message of peace and love is the same, no matter what the language is.

With this ideal in mind, the Asian Conference on Religions for Peace (ACRP) will be held in Manila for the first time with the Pontifical University of Santo Tomas and the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines as hosts.

To be held Oct. 17-21, the conference will have the world's top religious leaders convening in UST and the Manila Hotel, and having meaningful discussions on how to make peace in various fields of modern life by drawing on each religion's spiritual traditions.

The conference will examine peacemaking in Asia based on the five cohabitance around which a consultation will be framed to implement recommendations and to address emerging issues.

The subthemes are: peacemaking through shared security and conflict-transformation; peacemaking through human rights education; peacemaking through common values and humanity-building; peacemaking through sustainable development and social justice; and peacemaking through building the past and healing the future.

Forgotten spiritual heritage

"Modern Asia is suffering from the pursuit of material development, and so the spiritual heritage has become the forgotten truth in many of Asia's secular societies," said His Excel. Khin Maung Saingon Htin, secretary general of ACRP.

"Now the trends in the mainstream worldwide, but of humanity as well, are in many extreme consumerism and abuse of nature. Here, the spiritual traditions in Asia have the answer to this new crisis. In this assembly we have very chapters and very delegates from many countries across Asia. ACRP is definitely developing and comes to have more support, too. We hope every participant becomes a peacemaker, not only for their country but also for Asia and the world."

According to the CBCP for Dialog, "Peacemaking in Asia," was chosen due to the importance of making peace in a world that has become a more dangerous place to live in.

During this historic event, the ACRP will be called upon to examine practical ways to combine the Asian religious values—nonviolence, love and compassion—each one covers concepts to address the problems of structural violence, economic disparity, poverty, ethnic tensions, suppression of human rights and environmental destruction.

It will also seek and draw out many examples of empowering religious communities, so that they can participate in social transformation firmly based on the peacemaking values of each religious tradition.

A perfect example of this is Muhammad Gandhi's nonviolence and Satyagraha, or truth force. The model combines spiritual values and social action and illustrates how the ACRP can foster peacemaking initiatives at local, national, regional and international levels.

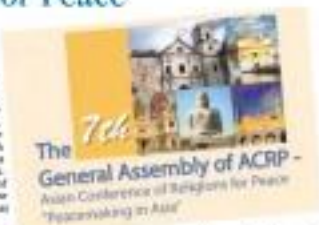
Impressive track record

ACRP has set an impressive track record in forging peace initiatives such as the boat people (Vietnamese refugees) rescue project. It has launched the Human Rights Center in New Delhi and Bangkok, and established the ACRP Peace Education Center in Seoul, Korea.

The first ACRP was held in Singapore in 1976, after participating religious leaders from Asian countries in the 1974 World Conference on Religion and Peace in Belgium decided it would be best to hold a regional conference similar to the WCRP. The Asian ministers aim was to maximize the Asian religious and cultural heritage, to preserve human dignity, and to promote justice and peace in the Asia-Pacific region.

The next ACRP general assemblies were held in New Delhi, India (1990); Seoul, Korea (1996); Kathmandu, Nepal (1991); Ayutthaya, Thailand (1998); and Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2003), which had the theme "Asia, the Reconciler," and was attended by some 300 religious delegates from Baha'i, Buddhism, Christian, Confucian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Shinto, Sikh, Tao, Zoroastrian and other religious traditions from 20 Asian and Pacific countries.

Before the Oct. 17 conference, a youth meeting with the theme "Kapatiran, Kapayapaan, Kalikasan, Kalikasan: Together to Peace" will be held on Oct 13-15 in Mindanao, and a conference meeting on the theme "Healing the Past & Building the Future" on Oct. 16 to 17.



"HINDI Para sa Lahat"

"ANG GLORIA ng Pasko"

Seminarian-artists to hold art auction

PAINTINGS BY JESUS HERALDO ADEL other seminarian-artists of the Regationist of the Heart of Jesus Seminary are on view at Our Lady of Beautiful Love Parish on Wackenger St., Marvilla Park, Paranaque.

The works will be auctioned off on Dec. 7, 5 p.m., at the Regationist Seminary, 65 St. Patrick St., Marvilla Park, Paranaque.

Christmas cards bearing the seminarians' artists' designs are now available. Proceeds of the auction and the Christmas cards will be for the education of the seminarians and the "Sagan Kids."

The Regationist of the Heart of Jesus Seminary began 32 years ago as an expansion mission by an Italian Congregation of St. Hannibal Mary Di Francia, the Father of the Orphans and of the Poor, in 1974. The congregation works to spread the message of the Sagan, or "the prayer to obtain good and holy workers for Jesus to the country."

Today, with over 60 seminarians, the Regationist of the Heart of Jesus Seminary also performs ministry for poor kids, through feeding programs and catechism. Many of the Sagan Kids have become grown-ups and are responsible members of society.

"MAY PAGKAIN Pa Ba!...Kulit Papers"

Its many ministries compel the seminary to raise funds for its various programs, as well as for tuition and support for the education of its seminarians.

Fr. Jesus Hurtarte, Regationist superior, urges Catholics to buy the paintings at the auction as well as the Christmas cards to help the Regationists in their various ministries for the needy.

Call 824-2605 or 828-3453 and 829-2636.

ENTERTAINMENT

Edito Emerio Q. Velarde

INSIDE

- 25 artists sing Gary V hits in tribute CD from Star Spin City /F4
- Comedian Bayani Agbayani also wants to inspire people /G1

YouTube now airs CBS shows

NEW YORK—YOUTUBE, THE LARGEST video-sharing website, has started to stream full-length TV shows from CBS Corp.'s website, in its latest step to boost advertising revenue.

The site, owned by Google Inc, said on Friday it was talking to other TV networks to sign similar deals.

A slate of archive CBS shows, including "Star Trek," "Young and the Restless" and "Beverly Hills 90210," will now be available in full-length episodes of 20 minutes to 40 minutes.

The shows will have a full-length badge to distinguish them from shorter clips, and will be available in a new "Theater" mode to improve the viewing experience, YouTube said. Reuters

LOS ANGELES—ANGELINA Jolie, an adoption advocate, was devastated never to get pregnant until final IVF cures sting and changed her mind, the actress said in a magazine interview.

The actress (dads), dubbed Hollywood's, reviewed the birth of their first biological child, daughter Shiloh, in 2006. Their twins, Vivienne Marcheline and Knox Leon, were born in July to France. Jolie, 33, and Pitt, 44, have been together since 2005.

"One of the life-changing things that we did ... is that I was absolutely never going to get pregnant," Jolie said in an interview to appear in the November issue of W magazine.

"I never felt that it was the right thing to do. Now I wouldn't trade that experience for the world," Jolie said.

Jolie adopted son Maddox from Cambodia, and later daughter Zahara from Ethiopia, before having Shiloh with Pitt.

Before the birth of the twins, Pitt and Jolie adopted another boy, Pax, from Vietnam.

Jolie told W that Pitt's attitude toward her adopted children helped convince her to have biological children.

"He stopped talking about having other kids ... so I realized he was happy with them as his children, completely. I knew he would never see them as different, and then gave me a certain peace," Jolie said.

The W magazine interview is accompanied by family pictures taken by Pitt, including a cover shot of Jolie lovingly nursing one of the twins. Reuters

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

METRO MANILA THEATER ASSOCIATION

NOW SHOWING

Though rooted at home, 'Boses' is for the world

BAVURA performances. The lead actors (from left): Coco Quijano, Cherry Pie Picache, Ricky Davao and Julio Diaz.

By Joel David
Contributor

("BOSES" is currently screening at the Ayala Malls Manila International Film Festival (Oct. 13 and 15) in the Ayala Cinema category.

On Nov.18, she movie opens the four-day film festival at the Rep Theatre Hackensack in Manila. The festival is organized by the OIL (President's Committee on Culture, Film Agency and Office of Student Affairs).

Dir. 4 to 7, "Boses" competes at the Women's International Film and Television Showcase in Hollywood.

The movie is endorsed by the Catholic Educators Association of the Philippines for viewing by students. It was given a conditional "R" rating by the Cinema Evaluation Board.

Racing by the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board was a PG 13, with this remark: "Although there is need for adult supervision, [this movie] should be viewed by everyone, from grade school up."

REVIEW

IT IS NOT THE FIRST noteworthy film shut out of awards recognition in Cinemalaya's history. "Boses" joins a long list of works overlooked upon initial release, whose rewards would come in the form of belated acclaim, discursive attention, unfunded cheerful life, or maybe all three.

"Boses" this serves to indicate a push in the Cinemalaya island: the hope that talent from the margins could emerge the mainstream while playing by the latter's rules.

The movie takes a grim observation (child abuse) and enriches it with high-art therapy (classical music). The narrative unfolds within strong doses of pleasure, unexpected and startling in its effectiveness, given the nature of the material.

Already the top grosser among the latest Cinemalaya crop, "Boses" appears capable of attaining blockbuster status. Repeat viewership is fostered by word-of-mouth recommendation, occasionally hysterical responses even in mid-viewer that it has ground to tic and not-to-hors solution included on its gifted and charismatic child performers, Julian Duque.

Not perfect

To be sure, "Boses" is not a perfect film. A more radical handling of its material would probably have made us better understand, even empathize with, the abuser's domestic condition and the child's reason for willing to remain a victim for so long. Those reservations aside, real-life accounts may suspect that the filmmakers sanitized the situation, not to mention the language, insofar as actual child-abuse perpetrators, verbose, and therapists.

Given all the ways it might have fallen short, in "Boses" the heroine of master Cinemalaya character? One reason maybe that it is dedicated to Jaborn Velasco, a film artist, teacher, and scholar who gave a lifetime to the academe until his sudden, tragic demise a year ago this month, unknown to the rest of the world except for a handful of students and friends who swore by his selfless dedication and willingness to share everything he had.

The fact that filmmaker Ellen Ongkeko-Marfil makes this connection between the lives of her characters and that of an actual acquaintance indicates that she upholds the power of love, a value that, even more than film pleasure, tends to spare film experts used to the facile ways it sometimes gets exploited in the medium.

Indeed, the core relationship in "Boses"—between the young survivor of parental abuse and the violinist who mentors the former's talent (and, in the process, recovers from his own tragedy)—provides the film's heartbeat. Not only does the intervention start cure and void leisurely with a near-breakdown and bittersweet acquiescence, it also occasions luminous performances by the actors in thespian and acrimonious.

Stage to fire

Surprising, though perfectly logical, was Ongkeko-Marfil's acknowledgment, during one of the film's screenings that, in real life, Bulgaria in Caspar's violin mentor.

Ongkeko-Marfil's background in stage arts has obviously helped the impressive evolution of her cinematic skills. With "Boses," she hews close to what the late genius Lino Brocka and Ishmael Bernal—mismanagement among indie filmmakers in foreign festival and anti-mass audience pressure—struggled to achieve: an unapologetic weaving in the viewers' pleasure alongside intelligent direction.

Melodrama, the mode that Ongkeko-Marfil has chosen, poses a great challenge to serious film realizers. The genre belongs to the larger group of "body" films, so-called for their ability to provoke corporeal, as opposed to cerebral, responses—genre hump-raising as horror, sexual arousal to pornography, laughter inducement to comedy and, in this instance, tear jerking.

For the greater part of the last two decades, feminist critics have been spearheading a campaign to rehabilitate these much-derided genres, but their uphill conversion shows no signs of rendering level playing in high-art cultism, the indie film scene included.

"Boses" evinces a systematic working through of the elements peculiar to local melodrama: kilig symptom, tearjerk, heartbreak (only victim instead of villain), kabuhol, and pagsisiwalat. The peculiarities acquired between the teacher and student protagonists encapsulate the earlier depiction of the shifting nature of their interaction from farewell bonding, to push...to relief, to hysteria, to music-making, to a brief comic exchange, to a final display of exhortation.

One might wish that the performers had been sustained enough to allow Ongkeko-Marfil to use a single take, but the scene had unfolded in one continuous action—such was the brilliance of and sequence's nearly merciless conception, grand in romantic dimension yet and in its recognition that the just-finished individuals may never be this close, and this innocent, again.

Successful finale

The musical number that ends the narrative succeeds because it refuses to provide definitive closure for any of the characters. The teacher will have to contend with his newfound dependence on the validation provided by his pupil. The child will have to work out his loyalties he was surely taken figures. The biological father will have to face the reality of his irresponsibility in his vulnerable manhood. The social worker will start worrying whether her decision to reconcile the family was right.

A few films have helped hone revolutionary change, and the inward turn that "Boses" inspires ought to be bulletproof enough for the taboos behind it. Most local digital practitioners will continue to aspire for, and attain, limited honors abroad, but this is the first movie made by a colleague of theirs that, more than anything else, truly belongs to the workplace. cause it remains rooted at home.

Interested martial may also write to boses08@gmail.com or call Laurel at 09 19-6274-088.

Filmmaker Ellen Ongkeko-Marfil hews close to Brocka and Bernal

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Greenbelt
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Fairview Terrace
Robinsons Galleria
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SM Aura
SM Mall of Asia
SM Manila
SM North EDSA
SM Sucat
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SM City San Jose del Monte
SM City Santa Maria
SM City Sta. Rosa
SM City Taytay
SM City Bicutan
SM City Cabanatuan
SM City Clark
SM City Dasmariñas
SM City Lipa
SM City Molino
SM City Novaliches

Benjie Paras about to be a dad again

BENJIE AND LYE PARAS ARE EXpecting their first child, due in December. Benjie has two other sons—Andre, 13, and Kobe, 11.

Lye loves the two boys like her own. "Para akin ng rin sila. I would love Andre and Kobe any less," Lye says. "I will even love their mom to assure them that they are also my babies. At first they were resistant to anybody and anything—never ng dad nila but now they're excited about the coming of their baby brother. Tina boys na lang daw and they will be a basketball team."

What fatherhood means will first apply, now that he will be a daddy again? Easier to relate your kids say instead of hearing what you went on there," he says. "Find time to bring them to school and look home. It's the best time to talk to them, driving through the traffic."

The coming baby seems to be a lucky charm. After being jobless for several months, Benjie is now manager/utility/aide. He plays the sidekick of **Dennis Trillo** in the Aiza Seguerra "Gagambino," the best friend of Vic Sotto in the movie "Sigi Babo Tito Pictures" and the best friend of **Mikoy Navarro** in the movie "My Only Li'."

The excited parents-to-be showed us the sonograms pic of their baby. "Carbon copy ko!" exclaim Benj. The charming Para couple ought to be blessed.

For romantic feels like me, whose fuse must have fizzled, Benj and Lye are living proof that a second chance on love is worth taking.

Actor by accident

Gabby Concepcion called me with just midnight. I enjoyed our conversation, which covered mundane and profound stuff. "Did you know that I really wanted to be a dentist or a pilot?" Gabs intimated. "I became an actor by accident. Everything that's ever happened in my life is mostly unplanned."

I texted him, "How all the women you were involved with?" He laughed. "In a way, that's true. I wish I had met my wife Andre sooner, but I guess when I was ready and out to the US, that was the right time for her to come into my life. She really saved by me and lifted me."

Pilot, about friends like **Nadia Montenegro**, who stuck out her neck for him and got into trouble for it? "I appreciate Nadi's defending me," he says. "I just want to make it clear that she is not my 'inkwalasat' as others insist. Nobody can tell me what to do."

Gab only follows his gut feel and his heart, which beats primarily for his mom. "I'll spend time with her in the US for the holidays. I can't describe the pain I feel seeing her without my dad around anymore."

To lighten the mood, I asked him when he will make a movie with his daughter **KC**. "Since that was the last. For now, I want to work with **Angel Locsin** and **Sunshine Cruz**. If KC and I do a movie in, every movie after it will be anticlimactic."

Gab's colorful life seems to be a never-ending thrust. Even after all these years, people are still scrutinizing his every move. The fabulous but unconvincing all-grandma's boy accordingly.

Cool chefs

I had a delightful time hosting with the cool chefs of QTV's "Eto Tayo!" (Saturday, 11 a.m.)—**Emilio Lopez**, **Michie Simon**, **Nino Laguata**, **Jessie Edaniel** and **Jeremy Parisi**—and **Rembrad Katigbak** of "Quickfire" (in between shows daily). I found out from them that the concept of splendiferous is just a fallacy and that passion must be the main ingredient of any dish to make it really yummy.

"Eto Tayo!" has featured over a hundred celebrities and 300 recipes. "Quickfire" has become a battle for wedding cakes who claims to cook but can't even dishes.

WITH elder sons Andre (left) and Kobe, and wife Lye Paras. The couple is expecting their first child.

Chef Rembad is now a household name for his ingenious 10-minute recipes and Adventure has concluded but to be the latest's ambassador for "cause"—the fifth cause. I stayed Chef Jeremy if he's willing to join, show by because he's our weekend. He's game if there are

> After all these years, people still watch Gabby's every move

New television

"If I could be someone else, I'd want to be Batman," JC de Vera reveals. He toplines GMA TV romantic-comedy fantasy drama "Lobola" (premieres tonight, after "Dyesebel"), which is about a headbanded radio guru a dose of his own medicine when a mysterious gets him trapped in a woman's body. It's an adaptation of the hottest and award-winning Argentine television.

Does JC think he can steal **Mision Raines** is girlfriend material? "Definitely. But both of us would rather focus on work now," JC explains. "I want to earn her. I'd rather let nature take its course." That's living is risky Lakwit!

For Diet's 'Sake'

Dieter Ocampo (UCLA Foundation) invites medical practitioners, doctors, nurses, dietitians, nature lovers and health geeks to join "A Trek to Remember III: Medical Jesus! Mission and Pro-Christ Trek giving" in Kibungan, Benguet on Oct. 24-26. Registration is until Oct. 15. Call 713-0946 or 0922-854-9730 or log on to www.kidlifefoundation.org.ph for details.

Dieter's "kids" never hunger for love and affection. He keeps their hearts hanging!

PERSONAL: Most of our text was over to discussing couple Gil and Dhot Villanueva for the 5th post birthday dinner at Cuidito Banawa. Thanks a and to **Tita Amalia Fuentes**, Tito **Jose Gabbay**, **Miriam Quiambao**, **Pinangsle Barnardo**, Benjie and Lye Paras, Cris and Connie Escudero, **Ricky Davao**, **Butch Francisco**, **Cristine Reyes**, **Bruno Tenorio**, the French Embassy's Mattie Mandaluz, the French Chamber of Commerce's Hazel Ortiz, Isabel Atienza, Mounted and Lily Supetran, Kath Pen, Tito Bebot Santos, Nelson Tandoc, Josie Dimaisip and all my other friends who came to my extended celebration. As I opened a year sooner, I'm so to Mui Bibo because of all the friendships I've made along the way.

E-mail: rosario@philstarnews.com

25 artists in Gary V tribute CD

SONY RECORDS' "GV25" FEATURES 25 artists paying tribute to Gary Valenciano in celebration of his silver anniversary in show biz. Interpreting various Gary V hits are Kyla, Jamie Rivera, Aiza Seguerra, Jaya, Jed Madela, Erik Santos, Martin Nievera, Sarah Geronimo, Yeng Constantino, Regine Velasquez, Christian Bautista, Rachelle Ann Go, Sandy Seven, Toni Gonzaga, Zia Dantes, Jovit Baldivino, Jolina Magdangal, Angeline Quinto, Erik Santos, Martin Nievera, Sarah Geronimo, Toni Gonzaga, Zia Dantes, Rachelle Ann Go, Sandy Seven, Jovit Baldivino, Jolina Magdangal, Angeline Quinto, Christian Bautista, Regine Velasquez, Jaya, Jed Madela, Aiza Seguerra, Yeng Constantino, Kyla, Jamie Rivera

ENTERTAINMENT

RAYANI Agbayani has hilarious good times and bad.

OVERHEARD

Sex and Lea

Lea Salonga, Maria Chaves cover girl this month, on the "Modern taboos" and making babies: "It seems [can] be both [easy and exhilarating] if only men would accept that... I have myself in for a lot of both. To have a child, you better have a very reasonable."

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Comedian not just for laughs

By Nestor S. Cruz

ACTOR RAYANI AGBAYANI IS convinced that there is more to his needs as a comedian than making people laugh.

"I want my life story to inspire people not to run away from problems," Agbayani told Inquirer Entertainment over lunch last week.

Odd jobs

Agbayani, 30, worked as a copy-reader-cruiser while finishing Mass Communication at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines in Sta. Mesa, Manila. He graduated in 1992.

"After school, I worked as a waiter," said Agbayani. "I tried about that every night, thinking it was not the kind of job I studied hard for. But I found out I wasn't alone. Some of my co-workers were engineers and nurses."

Agbayani was said hired as a production assistant at GMA-7, then as an avid props coordinator for the now-defunct Rapido variety show "SST." Three months later, he became an assistant writer. He was promoted as head writer and kept that job for four years.

The actor recalled, "Life improved a bit ... my producers hired me as a talent for their show. Pero it's extra. But for a time, I lived in the attic of one of the studios on Broadway (in Greenhills)... couldn't could afford to commute to work every day from where I lived in Bicutan."

Struggle

With his earnings, Agbayani saved enough money to make the down payment on a mini cab. "Para I inherited it at P1,200 a month. I drove like mad myself. That was one of the lowest points in my life. But I have gone to jail," the actor said.

Opportunity

Then the opportunity arose for Agbayani to work for stand-upstar ABS-CBN. He taken as a comedian was recognized, and he became a host on the comedy show "Matsing ng Tinghoy Bayan." He was also cast in sitcoms like "Okay

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1:10, 4:00, 6:50, 9:40
3 IGOR
2:40, 4:50, 7:00, 9:10
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MIRRORS - R13
TROPIC THUNDER - R13

New screen triangle

COMING next year from 20th Century Fox, a movie about possibly the world's naughtiest dog, starring Jennifer Aniston and Owen Wilson. "Marley and Me" tells the true story of John and Jenny Grogan, journal lovers who decide to get a dog before starting a family.

DID YOU KNOW...

Comedian not just ...

From page G1

Else Whatever!" and "That's My Jibe."

He has appeared in over a dozen movies, the most recent of which was Joey Reyes' "Raising Sonik," released in 2007.

Aghajanti has also enjoyed some success in recording, most notably with his novelty song "Otso Otso," composed by Libo Cotto.

"I'm satisfied with what I have now," he said. "Sobri cobro na ang blessings. My only wish is to make one memorable comedy film, similar to Johnny Bautista's 'BOYFriend Diaries.' I want it to be something that my kids and grandkids will be proud of."

The actor said he is constantly looking for ways to share his blessings. "With my earnings, I helped put some of my nephews and nieces to school. I also bought a house for my mother, but the one building with Tweet diner so far was to spread those with a group of young cancer patients. I brought them toys and took some of them out to eat," he related.

On his new show on TV5, "My MVP" a sports reality program for aspiring basketball players, Aghajanti continues to inspire people to work hard to fulfill their dreams.

"As one of the hosts, I inject humor in most of my segments," he said. Aghajanti shares hosting chores with current Azkals de Manila Blue Eagles coach Norman Black and former PBA cager Jimmy Mariz.

"I can relate to most of the contestants. I once dreamt of becoming a basketball player, but I was too easily-stopped to even buy a pair of ladies' shoes," he said.

Some 2,000 aspirants, ages 16 to 35, from across the country turned up to audition for "My MVP." Only 400 were shortlisted. The number was then whittled down to 50, and finally to 15.

"We are currently in the process of picking the Top 10, who will get the chance to win P1 million worth of prizes," enthused Aghajanti.

Those who get the 10 slots will each get an educational plan, which they, or their kids, can use.

Aghajanti pointed out: "Mahusok ba lang sa tuyan, pinaka ka na. Eto nga'y ako ay play with us kay than Coach Norman and Jimmy." Th outdoor cercas ng para 'yan."

"My MVP" airs Sundays, 6 to 7 p.m., on TV5.

E-mail

AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1
1 TROPIC THUNDER
2 BODY OF LIES
3 EAGLE EYE
4 IGOR

GLORIETTA 4
1 EAGLE EYE
2 IGOR
3 BODY OF LIES
4 MIRRORS
5 IGOR
6 TROPIC THUNDER
7 BURIED ALIVE

GREENBELT 1
1 TROPIC THUNDER
2 BODY OF LIES

GREENBELT 2
1 PELICULA : TV5 SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL
2 BODY OF LIES
3 IGOR
4 EAGLE EYE
5 TROPIC THUNDER

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 BODY OF LIES
2 TROPIC THUNDER
3 IGOR
4 IGOR
5 EAGLE EYE

AYALA CENTER CEBU
1 BODY OF LIES
2 TROPIC THUNDER
3 BIG STAR
4 BIG STAR

MARKET! MARKET!
1 BODY OF LIES
2 IGOR
3 BURIED ALIVE
4 TROPIC THUNDER
5 EAGLE EYE

TRINOMA
1 IGOR
2 BURIED ALIVE
3 MIRRORS
4 IGOR
5 EAGLE EYE
6 TROPIC THUNDER
7 BODY OF LIES

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1 EAGLE EYE
2 BODY of LIES
3 TROPIC THUNDER
4 BURIED ALIVE
5 IGOR
6 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
7 MIRRORS
8 INAVAQ
9 MUTANT CHRONICLES
10 MAKE IT HAPPEN

ERMITA

1 BURIED ALIVE
2 IGOR
3 BODY OF LIES
4 TROPIC THUNDER
5 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
6 RESERVED
7 RESERVED
8 INAVAQ
9 MIRRORS / EAGLE EYE

METRO EAST

1 BURIED ALIVE
2 IGOR
3 BODY OF LIES
4 MIRRORS
5 MAKE IT HAPPEN
6 TROPIC THUNDER
7 EAGLE EYE
8 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM

NOVALICHES

1 MIRRORS
2 BODY OF LIES
3 IGOR
4 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM

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1 TROPIC THUNDER
2 BODY OF LIES
3 IGOR
4 BURIED ALIVE

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4 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM

LIPA

1 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
2 THE SEPARATED of the TRAVELING PANTS 2
3 HELLBOY 2
4 GRAVEDIANCERS

DASMARINAS

1 MUTANT CHRONICLES
2 BODY OF LIES
3 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
4 EAGLE EYE

IMUS

1 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
2 BODY OF LIES
3 EAGLE EYE
4 THREE KINGDOMS

ANGELES

1 DISASTER MOVIE
2 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
3 THE SEPARATED of the TRAVELING PANTS 2
4 100 FEET

STARMILLS

1 THE SEPARATED of the TRAVELING PANTS 2
2 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
3 MY BEST FRIEND'S GIRL
4 DISASTER MOVIE
5 100 FEET
6 THREE KINGDOMS

BACOLOD

1 HELL BOY 2
2 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
3 DISASTER MOVIE
4 100 FEET
5 MY BEST FRIEND'S GIRL
6 RIGHTEOUS KILL

ILOILO

1 BODY OF LIES
2 MIRRORS
3 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
4 HELL BOY 2
5 DISASTER MOVIE
6 MY BEST FRIEND'S GIRL

Outsider no more

"FILIPINOS don't stick to a uniform aesthetic...a specific look. This diversity interests audiences and critics alike."

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER JOHN TORRES confesses that heartbreak led him to his current passion, cinema.

Four years ago, an unemployed Torres set out to pursue his dream. With a broken-down Sony VX2K, he shot in the streets of Quezon City "at odd hours."

He recalled, "I didn't know what to do with the unrelated scenes ... one day, I woke up with all the right words to string them together."

The product of that euphoria was "Sinukuan," his first short film. "It's about surviving and dealing, waiting for something to happen, for someone to come into your life."

Fast-forward to the here and now: Torres has achieved a certain measure of success, with his films winning awards and accolades here and abroad. His notably low-budget film "Todo" won in Cinemanila 2005, and his first feature, "Todo, Todo Teros," at the Vancouver film fest in 2006. "Todo" was also one of 47 Filipino films showcased at the recent Hubi Cinema festival.

His second feature, "Here Where I Was a Child Outside," was screened in international film fests in Rotterdam, Berlin and Singapore.

Variety critic Robert Koehler commends "Here": "Torres is making his own brand of diary film ... his approach borrows up a stale, overworked genre."

Dolly Chua, Singapore festival director: "With his films, I [learn] to actually whispering in your ear. It's cinema so personal, it's like a confession."

What led you to filmmaking?

I was always the shy kid who ... sat in a corner, looking at beautiful faces from a distance. Early on, I was trained to observe and make friends with images and details, and I would try to convey a certain feeling or tell a story in myself. I had my own little cinema in my head.

What led you to do "Sinukuan"?

I've always wanted to pay tribute to my dad, Obdulio Torres, a writer of children's books and hero to numerals for awards. My father was a long-time hero, but something happened, and he was taken off the pedestal. I figured, that, if I were to move on in filmmaking, I should resolve certain issues. So I went ahead on my own journey. Though I didn't remedy absolutes my family, I spent lots of time away from them. I attended festivals abroad, which gave me the much-needed distance. Meeting people from different circles made me realize that we are always obsessed with being an insider. I discovered things quite the opposite. That I am an outsider ... in the journey and that I am, in fact, also a "child outside," and it's quite a liberating thought, actually.

Filipino films are getting noticed abroad. What's your take on this?

It's encouraging for independent filmmakers. We are ... that our films can cross cultural differences, consciousness things that are 'Filipino and universal at the same time. It's unfortunate, however, that more than [need to] have all those brand losers printed on posters just to attract viewers to local screenings.

Does there's the problem of "selling a "festival" film." There is the formula trap ... using the same superficial [for] a certain distance to be accepted. I am not saying that I'm faultless in this regard. But all of us need to find our own way of telling stories. We need to be fearless and less "safe." After all, Filipino filmmakers are known as mavericks on the world stage. We don't stick to a uniform aesthetic, a specific look. And the diversity of our tastes interests audiences and critics alike.

Who are the filmmakers you look up to? Influential mentors?

Rillat Tahimik ("Magnanakaw ng Bangungot" and "Kuratong"), Mike de Leon ("Sisa/Sisa"), Brillante Mendoza ("Debakle," Colony Telegay), Chris Marker ("La Jetee," "Sans Soleil"), all the fashion Turkovsky films I've seen so far. I respect and admire Lav Diaz ("Evolution of a Filipino Family") ... he's the best Filipino filmmaker right now. We need more Peraltes ... we wanted to see to lose that spirit of his.

How can indie films reach a wider local audience?

We can tap schools and have discussions with students, and, with the help of school administrators and the government, maybe [integrate] these into the curriculum. We should ask cinema owners to give discounts to [students]. We should have more mall screenings, more venues like Indieflow in Robinsons Galleria, and we should encourage more festivals like Cinemalaya to tour entries nationwide. We should also encourage film criticism [to] elevate film literacy.

Where is the Filipino indie scene headed, with filmmakers going in different directions and tackling diverse themes?

And that's good ... we have much to say. I'm interested in how slawyer filmmaker will look in life in Davao or how a chemist filmmaker can convey a broken heart. I'm amused that a housewife in Bacolod is boasting to use a borrowed video 8 and direct a high-schooler in Pangasinan is directing with his friends in the deep north. Digital video has made filmmaking accessible, and everyone can attempt to make one. A lot of it will be crappy, but out of the pile will emerge future masterpieces and the new mavericks of cinema.

Is digital technology a boon or bane?

I wouldn't have made my films if not for digital video. But there shouldn't be a quarrel between film and video. You pick one based on aesthetics. Video offers more possibilities. But some stories won't work with video.

What are your future projects?

I'm working on a film set in Mindanao ("Mindalitan"). I asked Davao filmmaker Sherad Sanchez to write the script. I'm flushing out the dialogue and the love angle. I'm lucky to have grants from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the Hubert Bals Fund of Rotterdam, and the prize money from the Cinemalaya film fest.

E-mail bsandiego@inquirer.com.ph

TAKE FIVE

Young indie filmmaker John Torres urges peers to become fearless mavericks

Oprah Winfrey

Oprah gives big this month

"OPRAH'S BIG GIVE" TELEVISION DEBUTS on the Hallmark Channel consumes on Chicago, Oprah Winfrey's hometown. The TV host gathers the final three contestants at the famous Essex Park to tell them about their next mission: "The Big Family Reunion."

For the first time in the competition, the finalists will be reunited with their loved ones, but going home won't be a vacation.

On Oct. 19 at 8 p.m., each giver will receive $10,000 and four days to find people in need and "give big in a creative and exciting way."

Three contestants are left on the "Big Give" finale on Oct. 21 at 6 p.m.—Stephen, the fashion lover; Brandi, the pageant queen; and Cameron, the young self-made millionaire.

In their final mission, "The Hero Of Your Block," they must give big in Oprah's hometown of Chicago—with no seed money and in only 48 hours.

CLICK!

Culinary quest

"Food Paradise" on Discovery Travel & Living goes across Australia in a quest for the best—in the grandest all-you-can eat buffet spreads in Vegas to where one can find perfectly glazed, jelly-filled and chocolate-coated donuts.

It also reveals interesting and unconventional ways of how the food can be done. Cooking meat over a fire is barbecue the American way but throwing spaghetti on the grill?

The show airs Thursdays starting Oct. 16 at 8 p.m., with encores on Sundays at 2 p.m.

'Soda Cracker'

The MGM Channel presents "Soda Cracker," the story of a rough Chicago cop whose partner is gunned down by a sniper.

Nash's pursuit for vengeance takes him into Chicago's ruthless underground for his quest for the killer leads him right back to his own police department.

The movie, starring Fred Williamson, Maud Adams and Bo Svenson, airs tomorrow at 9 p.m.

Eureka: Brains and brawn can mix /H3

LEARNING
Editor Chelo Bacud Formoso

Frannie befriends an odd one /H4

POINT GUARD Jai Reyes of the UAAP basketball champion Ateneo Blue Eagles gets crazy attention from audience. KIM HAPLAN

From rivals to readers

By Lawrence de Guzman and Rizza Pedroso
Inquirer Research

ALTHOUGH THEY DID NOT get along on the basketball court, rookie basketball stars Nonoy Alicias and Jai Reyes from rival schools De La Salle University and Ateneo de Manila University, respectively, cheered the book on their rivalry and unlikely pairing at a special Inquirer Read-Along session held yesterday as part of National Book Store's Children's Reading Fair month in SM North.

The session also featured singer-actor Jeffrey Hidalgo and siblings storytellers Jaclyn Josefina and Madeline Castillo.

During the afternoon session, Gloria Ardaiz Africa read "Ang Alamat ng Mangga" by Rene Villanueva, while Blue Eagle Reyes read "Look for the Star" by Grace Chong. Returning Read-Along celebrity model Heidi Calma read "Langgam at Tipaklong," as retold by Alberto Antigalog.

Although ex-rivalries Jessica and Cecilia (admittedly) pre-created two stories—Carla Paez' "Ang Magkakalayo" and Ingrid Antigal's "Tiktik at Biyak."

Another session held at the Inscom main office center at the same time featured actor Dennis Trillo, model Bianca Amorsolo, Sophia School principal Ann Alcaraz and Sophia school storytelling champion Dana Isaac and Kyla Cortes and Daniel Gilbert Alcaraz.

Reading fair

Aside from the storytelling session, the fair at the SM North Edsa Event Center Activity Hall also featured toy photobooth, coloring, drawing and library counting. Around 40 booths attended the event.

In addition to holding the Children's Reading Fair, which is now in its fourth year, NBS has made books accessible to the children through the Bookfair 4U mobile library unit.

From Oct. 11 to Nov. 16, NBS is offering up to 20 percent discount on selected local and imported children's, young adults' and parenting titles. With each purchase, a peso will go to the NBS Foundation for the building of the Bookfair 4U mobile library unit.

"On Nov. 16, the culmination of NBS' celebration of the reading month), NBS will turn over the first library unit to chosen barangay. The unit will be filled with books from that will be given to children for free. The reading habits of kids will have to be monitored by the barangay leaders," explained Bea Tirona, NBS Foundation project coordinator.

"We'll reward a barangay official whose books are in the results of the monitoring," Tirona said.

NBS has partnered with Sesame Read-Along for many. So far, said, "we have provided thousands of promoting reading among children. We also want to encourage the parents to make reading a habit for their children."

"We want to promote reading in a holistic way, engaging parents, children as well as the whole community," said Cleia Rose Cayton, marketing services manager of NBS.

"We encourage people to support the program by buying books. It's three-pronged: you get discounts, you learn and, in the process, you get to help schools," she added.

As a child, Blue Eagles playmaker Reyes said, he was into reading fiction and stories and library books. Now a third year communications technology management student, he admits his favorite books as a means to entertain himself to more, training his brain to read.

On the other hand, Alicias admitted that he hardly had time to read due to his hectic schedule, but he believed it was crucial for kids to read "because they're like a sponge, ready to absorb knowledge."

Reyes, who did some coaching during the session, said reading would also couple them with English skills.

"I was nervous because it's my first time, but as soon as I saw the kids and sat with them, everything went fine. I enjoyed it," added the 20-year-old rookie.

Unlike Alicias, it was Hidalgo's second time to grace the Read-Along as a reader—and he said he was willing to return whenever invited. "The power of a motivational person, it's like reading to hundreds of kids! But now I'm just Cookie's understudy," he said.

Smarter kids

Mother Annabelle Tee was encouraged to see parents who brought their children to the NBS event. "I believe that parents should be active in helping our kids get into reading," said Tee, who brought along sons Kylie, 10, and Ralph, 7.

"It's a fun activity. I enjoyed the stories," said Kylie, who confessed to be engrossed in the Harry Potter series. "I believe that reading will make a kid smarter," he added.

Six younger Inscom Pulpolites participated actively in the games and the story-telling sessions. "I want to become more modest because Sophie Starr," he said.

Saturday's Read-Along session, hosted by Aurora Injurosa-Ruben Ruth Navarro and Mogi Garcia of Corporate Affairs, was in cooperation with National Book Store, with co-presenters Kinderkid and Hiki. Others present included LUBAS, Hiki, Adarna House Princess, Harper Collins, Abyss, Reborn, Lampara books, MSA, Penguin, Philippine Bible Society, PHCOM, Random House, Rising Star, Shoybooks, Simon & Schuster, and Total-Child. Inquirer was also given by Chips Delight, Goldilocks and Eight o'clock.

The inquiry relating to the benefits of the mobile library program may e-mail Bea Tirona at 633-8108 ext. 56 for details, or e-mail nbsfi@nationalbookstore.com.ph.

SINGER-COMPOSER Jeffrey Hidalgo holds his own against star athlete-readers. KIM SANGALANG

School ahoy: A nurturing place for sailors' kids

Text by Pablo A. Tarroza
Photos by Mandy Navarro

AT BARANGAY PILLAR SEAMAN'S VILLAGE, some 80 percent of residents are families of seafarers who are away 10 months a year and home for only about two months.

Thus, St. Pancras Academy inside the subdivision has cautioned itself to nurture and guide children who do not get to see their fathers as much as they want to.

St. Pancras is known as the parent-owner of children, as well as health outreach.

Marlina Oco-Robles, founder of the school, stressed that the formative years of these children never were wasted. So the school teaches "values that will help these children's parents appreciate what their fathers are doing for them. We know that families with absentee parents or bad characters coping with problem children who long for the presence of a father."

Ruby Olivera-Jose, academic adviser of St. Pancras Academy, says, "I always tell teachers that the children need special attention. So out of their tasks is to support students by making them aware of and understand situation issues... Per one-page wrapping of movies, poems, even jokes, that's the real e-mail to their parents... The teachers have included this exercise in their lesson plans."

School principal Letty Silvestre, herself a seafarer's wife, says, "In reading, reading, writing and even history, we find ways to introduce family values that will help children cope with and understand their fathers' long absences."

She adds, "If you have a common's wife, you have to be creative. You have to find ways to solve your children's concerns without a man in the house. As a teacher, you have to work double hard to make sure to the children's mind that their fathers are working for the family's sake and not abandoning them."

Reading program

An initiative Oco-Robles introduced is a special reading program where both teachers and parents are encouraged to promote reading in school and at home. The advisers parents in find time to read to their children before going to bed.

"The result is that they have learned to read everything they can lay their hands on... they learn to speak more intelligently, they start to have a wider view of the world. Thus they start to develop a wider perspective of the whole human condition... we help children develop a richer relationship with their fathers," Oco-Robles says.

St. Pancras Academy receives upto students or keep up with reading requirements. Books from the school library can also be borrowed by parents in the village.

Oco-Robles says, "We advise teachers to read widely as well as they are set their own—personally. They have to stimulate their pupils their interesting and learning new things... pupils and teachers at St. Pancras Academy are reading quite a lot. I always emphasize that while readers make better teachers. And that reading is the best form of education outside and inside the school."

Readers who do not know what to do with old books are donate them to the St. Pancras library to support the school's reading program.

Send book donations to the classroom's Reading Program (Library, Attn: Antonette Alcala, Rodriguez, Charlye Drive, Brgy. San Isidro II, Dasmariñas, Cavite, or contact Myrna Sayco at 046-6736575 or 09163476436 to arrange for pickup.

A SEAMAN hands with his son through reading.

ST PANCRAS students have become voracious readers because of the school's special reading program.

Learning gets a partner in Mindanao

THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER and University of Mindanao, the largest and best run of the eleven universities in Mindanao, are partnering to promote reading among the close to 30,000 students in the Inquirer 17 campuses on the southern island.

UM is the first university in Mindanao to become a Playground for the Mind partner.

The memorandum of agreement was signed between top UM officials, headed by president Guillermo Torres, and Inquirer business bureau in Mindanao.

"We are deeply honored that the No. 1 paper in the country has chosen UM for its to partner in the Learning project in Mindanao. After 42 years of maintaining its university has grown itself a playground for minds and we could only wish to maintain that to elevate the education that we are offering students," Torres said.

He said they would ensure that the partnership be translated into more concrete activities to enhance the students' learning experiences.

"We continue to promote reading and encourage our students to read books, newspapers and other reading materials and not rely on the Internet for information... We are deeply pleased that we have the Inquirer as our partners," Torres said.

Torres said UM would always support the Inquirer's learning advocacy as "we envision and desire that the Philippines will become competitive."

Torres, whose family also own Davao daily Mindanao Times and radio station DXDD (Radio Mindanao) said he strongly believed in reading.

Karl Victor Kendrick Isaacson, director/general officer of the Inquirer for Mindanao, said the partnership would reflect in sending related activities to UM campuses, including read-along sessions and quiz bees.

He said the Inquirer was targeting other schools in Davao and other parts of Mindanao as partners of Inquirer Learning. Jeffrey M. Espeo, Mindanao Bureau

UNIVERSITY of Mindanao president Dr. Guillermo P. Torres Jr. (center) and Inquirer's Karl C. Tuvilla (second from left) shake hands after signing a MOA. Others in photo are Nick Pichon (left), Dr. Pedro San Jose and Ms. Jolicia Torres.

St Paul-Pasig tops journalism tilt again

ST. PAUL COLLEGE Pasig (SPCP) was overall champion in the recent annual Mendiola Secondary Schools Press Conference in the province of Pasig and San Juan (SMS). The school got 24 awards in 14 writing events, placing first overall in English and second in Filipino. It was proclaimed the Highest School Position for the seventh straight year. Paulwood. SPCP's official publication, was named one of the seven best school papers at the 2008 MSPC. The publication won first place for its editorial page. Since 1997, SPCP has won in the MSPC's individual writing events. In 2008, it also scored second best school paper, and was ranked first in sports section and second in feature section.

Miriam's 6-day course on spirituality and aging

THE DEPARTMENT of Miriam College is conducting a six-day course on "Spirituality in Midlife and Aging," on Oct. 20-25. Msgr. Manuel S. Gabriel, family life specialist who is currently based at St. Andrew's Parish in Pandacan City, is resource person. The course aims to provide participants with valuable opportunities to discover the meaning and value of living the second half of life, and beyond it. The course is open to the public, especially family life practitioners, nuns and priests, parish leaders, social workers, caregivers and professionals working with the elderly, and Miriam College graduate students. Course fee is P5,000. For inquiries, call Dr. Victoria B. Aguinaldo (4006400 loc. 2111) or 2626, or e-mail vaguinaldo@mc.edu.ph.

Faith launches Calabarzon college scholarships

THE FAITH ACADEMY INSTITUTE of Technology and Humanities (Faith) has launched a search for scholars for school year 2008-09 K under the Calabarzon College Scholarship (CCS) program. Now on its seventh year, the program is open to graduating high school students of private and public schools in the region. Faith scholarships are named after Filipino heroes with roots in Calabarzon: Jose Rizal, Apolinario Mabini, Emilio Aguinaldo and Manuel Luis Quezon. Faith also conducts the Search for Academic Excellence (SAE) Scholarship program. The second phase of the selection process, the interview, will be conducted on Dec. 6, and results will be announced on Dec. 12. For inquiries, call (046) 7180357 or e-mail inquiries@faithasia.edu.ph.

CEU hosts two int'l dental meetings

THE CENTRO ESCOLAR UNIVERSITY School of Dentistry hosted recently the 23rd International Association for Dental Research-Southeast Asia Division (IADR-SEA) and the 19th Southeast Asia Association for Dental Education (SEAADE) Annual Scientific Meeting at the Manila Hotel. Dr. Maria Jane D. Cortes, dean of the School of Dentistry, chaired the scientific planning committee. She was assisted by the school's faculty. The joint meeting was attended by educators, researchers, industry partners and students. A highlight was The Best Paper Award Award. Guest speakers from the United States, Europe and Southeast Asia talked about recent advances in dentistry, dental research, and dental education.

Lyceum's new business administration dean

LYCEUM OF THE PHILIPPINES University (LPU) president Fedenil P. Laurel appointed recently Dr. Leonardo B. Garcia Jr. as dean of the College of Business Administration. Garcia has a doctorate in business administration from the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP), MA in communications from the Ateneo de Manila University, and Bachelor's Degree in communications, magna cum laureate, from the New Philippine College of Commerce (now PUP). He has written several books on marketing and advertising and received numerous awards. He was dean of the School of Professional and Continuing Education at the College of St. Benilde, director of Graduate Studies and chair of the Department of Marketing Management. He has also been chair for marketing and advertising of the PTZ.

TIP joins global university alliances

THE TECHNOLOGICAL INSTITUTE of the Philippines (TIP) has partnered with SAP Philippines, a leading provider of business software. It is the seventh Filipino higher education institution to join the SAP University Alliances Program that promotes scientific and technical education by providing students and lecturers with access to SAP software training. It is expected that, as a result of the agreement, SAP software will be seamlessly integrated into the core curriculum of various TIP academic offerings to enhance the competitiveness of graduates.

Claretian tops Med Tech exams

ALEXANDER S. MANALOA JR., member of High School Class 2000 of Claret School of Quezon City, topped this year's licensure examinations for medical technologists administered by the Professional Regulation Commission. Manaloa graduated with a BS Medical Technology degree from the University of Santo Tomas. A total of 1,320 examinees took the licensure tests, with 877 passing the exams. Manaloa took his oath on Oct. 1 with other successful examinees at the Manila Hotel.

UST-CBCP hosts meet on religions for peace

THE UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS and the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) are hosting the 7th Asian Conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP) Oct. 12-15. About 600 delegates from 26 nations are expected. Theme this year is "Peacemaking in Asia." Participants will share experiences and become trained in peacemaking activities, as well as identify best practices in conflict resolution, peacemaking, social justice promotion, and sustainable community development. Representatives of Muslim, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Shinto religions from Japan, Australia, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, South and South-West Asia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and Thailand will attend.

Fatima president gets honorary doctorate

DIPLOMACY OF PEACE University (DPU) president Dr. Caroline Meinen bestowed recently the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, honoris causa, from the University of Luzon (UL). She was cited for her academic leadership, curriculum innovations, and efforts to secure accreditations and affiliations with various institutions for DPU.

Liberato C. Reyna Jr., chair of the UL Board of Trustees, said the citation writer Dr. Max Attila M. Ramos, III, president, conferred the degree. Elected Fatima Pursue of the Commission on Higher Education Regional Office 1 read Dr. Ramos's citation. Shermer Julio Viernes congratulatory message. In her speech, Enriquez underscored that success is like an olden schools.

Playgrounds for the Mind

A foreign land where Filipino students can feel at home

By Linda B. Bolido

Sending your children to study abroad but worried to have them so far away?

Well, Singapore has a suggestion—send them to the Lion City to have your brood run away by plane, the city name to close enough for you to visit when you feel like it yet far enough that the kids do not have to feel you are breathing down their necks.

Moreover, as Lynelle Siow Lai-Clarke and Belmer Ng Lai Seng of the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) point out, it is Asia. So, for young people learning the ropes for the first time, there will be no much about Singapore to make them feel at home while still able to relish the adventure of being in a foreign land.

"Singapore offers both something familiar and something different," Ng, manager, education market development, event department, education services division, says.

Siow and Ng say sending to Singapore children who want to study abroad, especially if they are leaving home for the first time, is a reasonable alternative. Not only does Singapore have the reputation for being an orderly country with an excellent peace and order situation to reassure every parent, but it is still very much Asian, making it easier for a first-time Filipino traveler to adapt to the change.

And the doors of Singapore schools are open regardless of what grade or level the student is—from elementary to postgraduate.

Although studying in Singapore will naturally be more expensive than staying in the Philippines, Ng points out that it will still be cheaper than the favorite destinations of Filipino students—the United States and United Kingdom. Even if the students have to go to private schools. "[private] schools are subsidized but only have limited places available to foreigners) and spend for board and lodging, a Singapore education will still cost less than going to farther destinations.

Instruction at all levels will also be closer to a Filipino student's experience as it will be more Asian than the kind he/she will get somewhere else. Ng cites as example Singapore in Business Administration (MBA). "Lots of case studies (so he takes up) are from Asia so they are more relevant to the region [and to Filipinos]," she says.

She adds that it also makes sense for Asians, including Filipinos, to go to Singapore for their MBA as it is the region's financial hub.

Ng says Singapore education is also abreast of global developments in both content and instruction, constantly preparing schools for the future. The government continues to invest in the upgrade and update of curricula and technology and constructs like laboratories and libraries. Schools have also established networks with leading educational institutions throughout the world allowing students access to a broader resource base.

She says several scholarships are also available to fully-qualified students with limited financial resources pursue an education in Singapore.

STB organized recently the jogjaso with school officials, parents and students in Manila and Cebu to orient them on Singapore education.

Tuition fee payable via ATM

DE LA SALLE-COLLEGE OF Saint Benilde has signed an agreement with MegaLink allowing students to pay their tuition and other school fees via MegaLink automated teller machines (ATMs). MegaLink, which has some 2,700 ATMs nationwide, will debit payments from cardholders' accounts for greater safety and convenience. DLS-CSB has 9,100 students and three campuses: 548 Arnaiz, Sta. Angela Ang International Center on Estrada corner Arellano Avenue, and the School of Design and Arts on F. Dominga St. Photo shows (seated, from left) MegaLink vice president-products and services group Bernadette Ramos, MegaLink president and CEO Benjamin F. Castillo, DLS-CSB president Bro. Victor B. Franco, FSC, vice president for finance and administration Br. Melfredo M. Bunag and vice president for academics Robert L. Tang during the contract signing.

NCR principals learn how to Lead

HONG KONG AND SHANGHAI Banking Corporation (HSBC) brought together selected elementary school principals from the National Capital Region for the two-weekend Leadership Enhancement and Development (LEAD) Program at the Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU).

Experts on education and management were invited as speakers to help sharpen the participants' passion to lead.

For her HSBC grade school headmaster Flor Dalusag S.J., School of leadership as a mandate.

Ugalya Capco of Capt. H. Francisco Elementary School said they were reminded of how important being an educator was.

Dr. Fe Hidalgo, former Department of Education (DepEd) officer-in-charge, challenged the participants to rethink their purpose. She guided them in formulating mission-vision statements and in listing down core values that defined their schools.

THE LEAD Program reminded participants how important being an educator was, according to one principal.

On the second weekend, Dr. Ma. Cristina Gonzales, director of the Ateneo Teacher Center, spoke on "Leading the Way: Creating a School Cluster Training Plan and Inclusive School Leadership" while Prof. Mario Antonio Lopez of the Asian Institute of Management discussed "Steps towards Leadership, Managing Your School."

HSBC engaged Ilo Mabi Global in implementing this project. Both organizations have been working together since 2003 to uplift the quality of Philippine education through book donations, reading programs and training of public school teachers.

Don Bosco graduates 20 foundation scholars

THE FIRST GROUP OF SM Foundation scholars at the Don Bosco Technical Institute, numbering 20, graduated recently from an industrial arts training program encompassing nine months of instruction in the center and five months of on-the-job training with partner companies.

The 20 graduates were the first beneficiaries of an agreement in October 2007 between the foundation and Don Bosco Youngtan author Fr. Anthony Bloemen for the grant of vocational scholarships to out-of-school youths.

SM Foundation, Inc. aims to provide financial assistance to needy youth who could not pursue four-year college education. The Don Bosco training was designed to give them skills for gainful employment.

Of the graduates, five finished the automotive mechanic training program, 13, their mechanic; two, general electrician; two, refrigerator and air-conditioner mechanic; and one industrial electronics.

More SM Foundation scholars are currently enrolled in various technical fields at the MSTC of the Don Bosco Technical Institute.

Jesus T. Romero, Don Bosco assistant technical director, said their graduates seem in demand because of their reputation for being hardworking, competent and trustworthy.

DON BOSCO SPI scholar Timmy Caballero (fourth from right), Conduct awardee for Rel. & Moral Humanics Course, with, among others, Don Bosco Technical Institute's (DBTI) Bro. Elmer C. Rodrigues, SDB, SM Foundation's Thess Sandiano, Eleanor Lansang, and Carmen Linda Angeles; Peregrina Caballero, mother of the awardee; Don Bosco alumnus Allan Amingod and DBTI's Fr. Anthony Pantilla Lamug, SDB and Jesus T. Romero

JRU law school alumnus is now top cop

GENERAL JESUS VERSOZA, A 1986 Jose Rizal University Law School graduate, is the new Philippine National Police (PNP) chief. Veroza replaces Director General Avelino Razon, who was also a JRU law student. Prior to his promotion, Veroza was the deputy PNP chief for administration. He also headed the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group and directed the PNP Southern Tagalog Command (Region IV). He has graduated from the Philippine Military Academy in 1976.

EUREKA! *Queenie N. Lee-Chua*

The athlete is also a scholar

ABOVE SAMS HE CORPUZ

Ateneo. A healthy mind is a healthy body. Nowhere is this more evident than in varsity athletes who also excel academically.

Blue Eagle Chris Tiu, in my calculus class, bounced consistently and never asked for special treatment. Lady Eagle Carolyn Tan, Dy, my research adviser, graduated summa cum laude. Blue Eagle Jason Salvador was the championship in the University Athletic Association of the Philippines. My sister Perla, a Management Engineering cum laude, was part of the UAAP second-place Lady Eagles team in 1989. Last semester, Ateneo Soldier Jay Rabanes was among the top ten in our psychology class.

Of course, there are athletes who struggle in school, but there are also many who balance sports and studies. Excellence in all fields is an Ateneo tradition, and Ateneo "Stay" Para-A is being good.

Paris graduated valedictorian from the Ateneo de Manila High School in 1971. A member of the Eagles since his sophomore year, he became captain during his senior year. He believes that excelling in basketball and excelling in books go hand in hand. He is now head of treasury at Sterling Bank of Asia.

Preparation

"Practice makes perfect," says Paris. "I started playing basketball in grade school in the dirt grounds in front of our classrooms, using the bulb-less lampposts as goals. Since they did not have backboards, we had to be very [precise] when shooting. But I was determined to improve my game, so master the rest."

In Junior varsity, training was tough. The Eagles would do cardio and physical conditioning several times a week, including basketball. They would hundreds of dribbles, lay-ups, foul shots. But Paris says, "By the start of each season, our movements were so reflexive and grooved that we were all ready to compete."

As for school, he says, "From my academic awards, I might have been mistaken for a nerd. I did indeterminedly attend to schoolwork, but I never pressured myself with long-range objectives such as graduation honors. I just gave equal importance to all quizzes as I did to university exams. The thought of not being able to measure correctly the simple quizzes, where all it took was to understand the previous day's lessons, would frustrate me and this threw me to do well. After all, quizzes were just reviews of the lessons."

When Paris told his children he loved quizzes, they were shocked. "Only weird people liked quizzes, they said. But because I diligently paid attention in the near-term, success in quarterly exams became much easier. After four years of just focusing on the day-to-day, knowing that each day's successful output would guarantee good results in the end, I graduated with honors. I hope Ateneo still gives daily quizzes."

Commitment, teamwork

Paris trained under Fr. Joseph Cuenco, a former Marine, and learned about mental toughness. "When one joins a team, in any organization, one must bring with him, as a representative of the school, a determination and commitment to improve himself and improve those around him.

"How can you or a teammate get better if only a few show up for practice? How can the fellow get the newspaper out if you, the sportswriter, do not finish your article? How can the Delaney Gilbert men eat a certain night play if the actors do not rest each other's abilities?"

With commitment comes teamwork. Bro recalls that during the 1970s, 120 people competed for only three available slots. Everyone, including current players, had to try out again. "So our members started to dwindle...those who remained were the ones who showed a keen sense of team play. Some had better individual skills, but a grandstanding player never had a chance. Basketball, after all, is a team sport, and the team is only as strong as its weakest member."

Ateneans strive to be more and various for others, and Paris says, "Unconsciously, I began practicing this when classmates would ask for my help with the lessons. This was expressed more often before I left the varsity. Being varsity is easy if we accept our shortcomings with humility."

Paris recounts a memorable experience. "Once, Ateneo had a chance to capture the first round flag. But a week before a crucial match against round-leader Mapua, two of our standout players were suspended either in low grades. The academic penalty was in no uncertain terms: a failing grade in the last 1986 grading cycle in the First Quarter finals, students demonstrated and walked out of their classes in protest. There was much misery and tension. In the end, however, we were firmly reminded by Director Father Hugo Rodriguez that we were there students in a school, before athletes. They [players] were not allowed to play, and the Ateneo and I lost what was probably my best shot at a championship."

"Did you view championship opportunities like that?" Paris continues. "Yes, but not enough to make me think that the school failed me. The experience helped me build a healthy and moral character. There must be balance. Whereas most manage their time between studies and sports and other activities."

Today, in the corporate world, Paris lives by these values. "Up to now, I scribble a small verse on the top of each paper I write on. The crux is a shortcut for what we used to do in school. It stands for A.M.D.G. Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam. For the greater glory of God. It is easier to sacrifice and improve ourselves through daily steps. I, to be determined and committed to a cause, to be role-oriented and to be humble. If we offer our words, thoughts and actions for God."

E-mail Queenie N. Lee-Chua at lifeabout@yahoo.com

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Frannie Learns a Lesson

Chapter Six: Jordan the Jellyfish

Last chapter: Frannie learns friends with Bonnie. Across the lunchroom, Frannie sees a lonely jellyfish.

"HEY! GUYS," FRANNIE SAID, looking across the lunchroom. "Do you see that jellyfish sitting above over there?"

"Yeah," Suzy said. "What about him?"

"Well, I think we should go ask him to sit with us," Frannie suggested.

"What for?" asked Tommy.

"I just don't think he should have to sit all alone," Frannie told her friends.

"I agree," added Bonnie. "Maybe he just needs some friends."

"But he's a jellyfish!" said Carter. "They're mean. They sting fish when they get mad, and they look funny. Look at him. Don't you think he looks funny?"

"Yes. He doesn't look funny," Frannie said. "You shouldn't say that. He's just like us. He may look a little different, but I'm sure he's nice. Let's just go say hello. If he isn't nice, then at least we tried."

"Yeah, okay," Carter finally agreed. The group swam over to the jellyfish's table. He greeted up as them with a look of surprise on his face.

"Hi," Frannie smiled when she spoke.

"Um, hello," said the jellyfish.

"I'm Frannie," Frannie continued. "This is Suzy, Tommy, Carter and Bonnie."

"Nice to meet you all. I'm Jordan."

"Jordan, would you like to sit with us?" Frannie pointed at their table.

"Really? You guys aren't scared of me?" Jordan asked.

"Nope. He would really like you to sit with us," Frannie smiled again.

"Yeah, that would be really nice," said Suzy.

"Yeah," agreed Tommy.

The group went back to their table with their new friend, Jordan.

"So Jordan, what do you like to do?" asked Carter.

"I love to play fetch!"

That was all it took to convince Carter that Jordan was okay. Carter loved fetch as well. He and Jordan became fast friends. As they chatted, the group noticed that Jordan was in the same grade as Bonnie.

They also learned that jellyfish are actually very gentle creatures, they just get a little defensive when they are threatened. They talked about school and fetch and how much they liked them both. They also asked Jordan questions about what it's like to be a jellyfish.

"Thank you for letting me sit with you," Jordan said. "Most fish think I'm different and don't like me because of it. It's really nice to meet fish like you guys that try to learn more about me, instead of just being scared of me. Do you want to eat together tomorrow, too?"

"Of course!" the group all answered.

Suzy, Carter, Tommy and Frannie swam back to class together. As they swam, they talked about their new friends. They got to their seats and waited for the lesson to begin.

This whole week in class they'll been talking about Land. The teacher told them about different land creatures like mammals, the weather changes on land, and the differences between sea and land creatures.

Mrs. Evanston took the room and started her lecture about humans, and their characteristics.

"Can anyone tell me one trait of a human?" she asked.

They like to throw stuff into the ocean and kill fish with it!" called a fish across the room.

"That's true, some humans do that, but not most of them dear," said the teacher. "Does anyone else have a characteristic?"

"Humans are tall, and they don't have fins, they have arms and legs," said Suzy.

"Very good, Suzy," said Mrs. E. "But most mers on that way for a long time, Mrs. E would ask questions and the students would answer back. Finally, just before the bell rang, Mrs. E had an announcement to make.

"Since you've all done so well answering my questions today, we will be having our first test on Friday won't be hard things we've talked about," she said. "Any questions?"

No one raised a fin. The class just looked up at the teacher with no expression on their faces. Frannie assumed they were all just nervous. The class gathered their books and headed out to the house.

"My first test is happening in two days! What am I supposed to do?" she thought to herself as she swam to the bus. She figured she could talk to her friends about it on the bus ride home.

Frannie swam faster to catch up with her friends, but as she approached them, she overheard them talking about how they all thought the test would be easy, but how they were still planning to study for it. Frannie was getting a little worried.

"How does everyone else know so much, and I have no idea? How am I supposed to study for this test?" Frannie wondered.

Next Monday: "Frannie's First Test"

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ACTIVITY GUIDE

To do and think about ...

1. As a class, make a list of ways people can be different. Remember that people can be different in many ways, not just physical. For example: Their culture, their language, their friendships, etc.
2. Make a graph separating students into categories (boys, girls, black hair, etc). Based on this graph, what is the "most common" student. For example, a boy with brown hair, brown eyes and no glasses. Discuss how being different does not make you better or worse.
3. Based on the story so far, write a four paragraphs predicting how the story will end.

Real life & values

Respect for others

Imagine you were Jordan. How would you have felt sitting in the lunchroom alone? Give reasons.

What will happen next?

How do you think Frannie will study for her test?

Using the newspaper

1. Search the newspaper for a photo of someone different from you. Make a list of the differences, and also make a list of how you are alike. Try to find at least six items for each list.
2. Look for examples of people working together for a common goal. Write a paragraph explaining how each of the different people are able to contribute to the task.

What you can do to save coral reefs

WHILE CORAL REEFS ARE NOT geographically close to everyone, there are still plenty of ways one can help save these ecosystems.

Coral reefs of the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), have are some ways you can help save coral reefs:

1. **Support reef-friendly businesses.** Ask what your dive shop, boating store, tour operators, hotel, and other coastal businesses are doing to save the coral reefs. This is especially important in coastal areas with reefs. Let them know you are an informed consumer and care about reefs.

2. Don't use chemically enhanced pesticides and fertilizers. Although you may live thousands of miles from a coral reef ecosystem, these products end up in the watershed and may ultimately impact the waters that support coral.

3. Volunteer for a reef cleanup. You don't live near a coral reef? There do other many people do with their vacations. Visit a coral reef, signed up other scuba-enjoying the beauty of one of the world's treasures while helping to preserve it for future generations.

4. **Learn more about coral reefs.** How many different species live in reefs? What new medicines have been discovered in reef organisms? Participate in training or educational programs that focus on reef ecology. When you further your own education, you can help others understand the fragility and value of the world's coral reefs.

5. **Become a member of your local aquarium or zoo.** Ask what they are doing and what your donation can do to protect/saving the world's coral reefs. The answers may pleasantly surprise you.

contest • contest • contest • contest • contest • contest • contest • contest

Think Think

National Book Store

HAVE LOTS OF FUN AND WIN A PRIZE

DO YOU KNOW WHAT A COLLAGE IS? IT IS AN artwork assembled from different kinds of material, such as bits of newspaper, fragments of photos, even old theater tickets.

For Chapter 6 of "Frannie Learns a Lesson," submit a collage showing people working together. Deadline is Sunday, Oct. 19.

The best collage will win a special Silk Flat watch, the young fishes watch from the makers at Swatch.

How to submit your collage

On a separate sheet of paper, write down your name, age, address, telephone number, cellphone number, school and the names of your parents. Include the signature of either of your parents. Paste the information sheet at the back of your finished board. Place the entry in a clear plastic envelope.

Submit your entry on an 8 x 12 inches Bristol board in any of the Swatch Stores (Glorietta 4, SM Mega Mall B, Trinoma), Swatch Kiosks (Alabang Town Center, SM City North Edsa Main, SM West of Asia, Shangri-La Mall, Robinson's Place Manila, Sta. Lucia Mall, Festival Mall, Power Plant Mall, Ayala Cebu) or Gift Gate Retail Office (71 Sgt. Esteban St. corner New York St., Cubao, Quezon City) by specified deadline dates.

Entries are judged on their originality (25 percent), creativity (50 percent) and composition (25 percent).

The Rak prize watches may be claimed by winners at Swatch Mega Mall during store hours.

Each week's winner must present all of the following to claim the prize: A valid original ID (birth certificate or passport), a notification letter or this announcement, acknowledgment receipt from the Swatch store or Swatch kiosk or head office.

Writing contest

Calling all grade-school teachers. Your class can write a Chapter 6 to the Frannie story after the eighth chapter has come. Write about Frannie and her friends working on the first issue of their school paper.

All entries must be between 600-1,000 words in length and in English. Deadline is Nov. 3.

Entries may be submitted online to: learning@inquirer.com.ph (indicate the subject as "Frannie") or via snail mail to "Frannie Learns a Lesson Writing Contest" to Inquirer Learning Section, PDI, 3F PDI Bldg., Pasong Tamo corner Yague St., Makati City.

The class with the winning story will receive the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary—one for each student, one for the teacher and one for the school library.

For complete contest mechanics, e-mail learning@inquirer.com.ph.

WEEK 4 WINNER. "My Best Friend and Me" by Nicole Therese L. Morada, 8, second grader at Assumption College, San Lorenzo, Makati City.

Join the IIE Lesson Plan Contest

WE HAVE FOUR MORE LAPTOPS to give away to teachers who submit the best lesson plans using any story, feature or material from the lessons. Winners for the months of September and October will be announced after the "Frannie Learns A Lesson" series.

If you're an active teacher in any public or private elementary or high school, design a lesson plan using any story or feature in the lessons and submit to us for a chance to win a laptop computer.

For contest mechanics, log on to www.inquirer.com. Submit your entry to lessonplan@inquirer.com.ph or send by post to "IIE Lesson Plan Contest" lessons Learning Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 3F PDI Building, Pasong Tamo corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City. The contest ends Dec. 05.